A SHORT HISTORY OF MUSLIM RULE IN INDIA

FROM THE CONQUEST OF ISLAM
TO THE DEATH OF AURANGZEB

BY

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The essence of royal protection consists in protecting the life and property of the subjects. They (kings) should use the principles of justice and equality in all their dealings with all classes of people, and should instruct powerful officials so that they may try their best to refrain from cruelty and oppression in their jurisdiction.

—SHER SHAH

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PREFACE

THE purpose of the present book is to provide a general history of Muhammadan rule in India up to the death of Aurangzeb for the use of teachers in secondary schools and students in Indian Colleges. The want of a book of this kind has long been felt. The older histories of the middle ages by European writers have now become inadequate and out of date owing to the rapid progress of knowledge in recent times. Most of the errors based on imperfect acquaintance with the original sources are repeated in all text-books, and the student of history, who aims at precise knowledge, demands more than what is contained in Elphinstone, Lane-Poole, and Vincent Smith. Excellent as they are in their own way, they are found sketchy in these days. The author has kept the requirements of the modern students always in view, and he hopes he has done his best to meet them.

The earlier portion of the book is largely an abridgement of the author's *History of Mediæval India* with which students of history are already familiar. The sketch of Mughal history, which is new, is fairly full, and will be found useful by those who will consult it, whether for the purpose of passing an examination or acquiring a knowledge of Indian history under the Mughals. The best authorities on the subject, original as well as secondary, have been utilised, and no topic of importance has been omitted. Attempt has been made to awaken the critical faculty of students by discussing controversial matters and by presenting the views of different writers in regard to them.

The advanced student for whom the book is not intended may find it inadequate for his purpose. He will be sadly

disappointed if he makes it a substitute for original sources into which he must dive deep himself if he aims at specialised knowledge. The professed object of this volume is to present to the reading public a concise and readable narrative of the achievements of our Muslim rulers, both Mughal and pre-Mughal, up to the death of Aurangzeb. The author hopes to add a chapter on later Mughals in a subsequent edition.

An important feature of the book is that the narrative is not confined merely to political history. An attempt has been made to describe the social and economic condition of the people at different periods. The life of a people must be viewed as a whole, and, to enable the reader to understand it fully, enough has been said about the growth of religion and literature. The interaction of political and cultural currents has been explained with a view to liberalise the student's conception of history and to enable him to develop a sense of right perspective.

Proper names have been generally spelt according to the method approved by the Royal Asiatic Society and diacritical marks have been placed over unfamiliar names and terms.

My acknowledgments are due to my friend and pupil, Mr. Kunwar Bahadur, M.A., LL.B., who has helped me in various ways in preparing this book. Most of the proof sheets have been read by him, and in the selection of illustrations and maps his advice has been of considerable help to me. Still there must be many imperfections which have escaped the author's notice. He will gratefully receive all corrections and suggestions for further improvement.

ALLAHABAD : ISHWARI PRASAD.
July 26, 1930.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE first edition of this book was very favourably received by students of Muslim history all over India. Its usefulness is shown by the fact that a second edition has become necessary in such a short space of time. I regret that owing to other engagements of a pressing nature I have not been able to add a chapter on the later Mughals as I had promised in the first edition. But the index has been provided, and care has been taken to remove the errors and discrepancies suggested by scholars of history. I am fully aware of the imperfections that *still* exist, but I hope kindly critics will continue to favour me with their valuable suggestions from time to time. In their appreciation lies my reward, and in their well-informed criticism my chance of further improvement.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALLAHABAD: ISHWARI PRASAD.
Dated August 24, 1931.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THIS short history of Muslim Rule has been liked by undergraduates in all the Indian Universities. The general reader who has no time to dive deep into the original sources has also found it useful. It is a matter of regret that the chapter on the later Mughals has not yet been added, and I beg my readers to forgive me once again. I hope to fulfil my promise in the next edition. A chapter on the rise and growth of Islam will also be added to enable the reader to have a better appreciation of the political history of Muslim India.

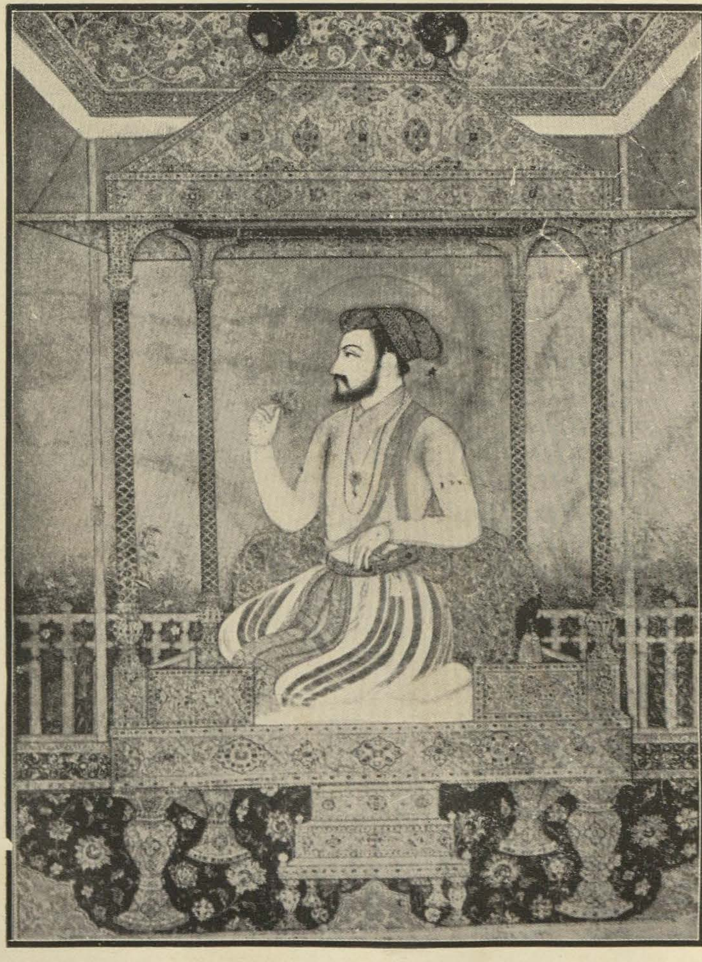
ALLAHABAD: ISHWARI PRASAD.
May 25, 1935.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

I HAVE to say again regretfully that owing to various engagements I have not been able to add the chapters promised in the last edition. But some necessary changes have been made in the text in view of the criticisms received. A few more maps and pictures illustrative of the development of Muslim art have been given which the reader will find extremely interesting and useful.

ALLAHABAD : ISHWARI PRASAD.
July 23, 1936.

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Emperor Shahjahan on the Peacock Throne

Frontispiece

CHAPTER I

PRE-MUHAMMADAN INDIA

Break-up of Harṣa's Empire.

After Harṣa's death in 647 A.D. India broke up into a number of independent states, always fighting against one another. Most of these were founded by Rajput chiefs who were distinguished for their valour and devotion to the military art. Among these warring states Kanauj rose to the position of a premier state, but even her pre-eminence was not universally acknowledged in the country.

Kashmir.

Kashmir was not included in Harṣa's empire, though the local ruler was compelled by him to yield a valuable relic of Buddha. It became a powerful state under Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa (725—52 A.D.) of the Kārkoṭā dynasty. He was a capable ruler who extended his dominion beyond Kashmir and the neighbouring countries, and once led an expedition against the ruler of Kanauj. Towards the beginning of the ninth century the Kārkoṭā dynasty declined in importance, and was succeeded by the Utpala dynasty.

This dynasty produced two remarkable rulers, Avantivarman and Śankaravarman. After the latter's death in 902, a series of worthless rulers followed, under whom the country suffered much from misrule and anarchy and finally passed into the hands of a local Muhammadan dynasty in 1339. In 1540 Babar's well-known cousin Mirza Haidar Daghlāt, the historian, conquered the valley and established his sway. After his death in 1551 disorder ensued and puppet kings were set up by rival factions. This state of affairs was finally ended by Akbar when the kingdom was annexed to the Mughal empire in 1586.

Kanauj

Kanauj rose early into prominence after the death of Harṣa. Yaśovarman was a powerful ruler, but his successors were unable to resist the aggressions of neighbouring states. It was the Gurjara chief Mihir Bhoja (840—90 A.D.) who retrieved the fortunes of Kanauj and built up an empire including the Sutlej districts of the Punjab, the greater part of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh and the Gwalior territory. His successor, Mahendrapāla, kept his father's dominions intact, but the next ruler Mahīpāla succumbed to the power of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Indra in 916 and although he recovered his dominions owing to the negligence of the latter, he suffered another defeat at the hands of the Chandela ruler of Jaijakbhukti. The process of decadence continued and the kingdom of Kanauj lost one province after another. The repeated invasions of the Muhammadans further weakened it, and in 1018 A.D. when Mahmūd of Ghazni appeared before the gates of Kanauj the Pratihār ruler, Rājyapāla, offered no resistance and made an abject submission. This cowardly act gave offence to his fellow-princes, and the Chandela Raja Ganda organised a league to chastise Rājyapāla. Ganda's son Vidyādhara marched against him at the head of a large army, inflicted a crushing defeat upon him and murdered him. Rājyapāla's successors vainly struggled to retain their power until they were finally subdued about 1090 A.D. by a Raja of the Gaharwār clan.

Ajmer and Delhi.

Another important Rajput clan was that of the Chohāns of Sambhar in Rajputana. Ajmer was included in the principality of Sambhar. The earliest ruler of whom we have an authentic record was Vigraharāja IV better known as Bīsaladeva Chohān, distinguished alike for his valour and learning. He fought against the Muhammadans, wrested Delhi from the Pratihārs and established a kingdom, extending from the base of the Himalayas to the Vindhyas in the Deccan. At his

court were produced the two famous dramas, the *Lalitāvigraharāja-nāṭaka* and the *Harakelināṭaka*, which are still preserved in the museum at Ajmer. He also founded a college at Ajmer which was destroyed by the soldiers of Muhammad Ghori. The most remarkable of the line was Prithvirāja whose deeds of valour are still sung by bards all over Northern India. In 1182 he invaded the Chandela territory and defeated Raja Parmāl of Mahoba. He also organised a confederacy of Rajput princes which defeated the Muslim host under Muhammad Ghori in 1191. But the latter reappeared next year and inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Rajputs. Prithvirāja was captured and killed. The Hindu power suffered an irreparable blow, and yet Raja Jayachandra of Kanauj stood apart and refused to combine with the Chohāns with whom he had a family feud. Next, Muhammad Ghori turned against Jayachandra himself and defeated him. Several members of the Gaharwār clan left Kanauj and migrated to Rajputana, while the able generals of Muhammad Ghori completed the work of conquest by reducing Gwalior, Anhilwaḍ and Kalanjar. Soon after, Qutbuddin, the gallant slave of Muhammad, was enthroned at Delhi as the overlord of the princes of Northern India.

The Chandelas.

Two other Rajput dynasties of importance in Northern India were the Chandelas of Jaijakbhukti (modern Bundelkhand) and the Kalachuris of Chedi (modern Central Provinces). The country was called Jaijakbhukti, *i.e.*, the territory or *bhukti* of Jaija, one of the earliest kings of the Chandela dynasty.

The Chandelas do not emerge into history until the ninth century when Nannuk Chandela established a small kingdom for himself. At first feudatories of the Gurjar-Pratihār kings of Kanauj, they became independent during the first half of the tenth century. Harṣa Chandela raised the status of the family by helping the ruler of Kanauj against Indra, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa

king of the Deccan, and by marrying a Chohān princess. His son Yaśovarman was a great conqueror. He captured the fortress of Kalanjar and forced the ruler of Kanauj to surrender a valuable image of Viṣṇu. He was succeeded by his son Dhanga.

Dhanga extended the boundaries of his father's dominions and joined the Rajput confederacy which was formed by Jayapāla to repel the invasion of Subuktagin, king of Ghazni. After his death, his son and successor Ganda carried on the warlike policy of his father. In 1018 when Sultan Mahmūd of Ghazni advanced against Kanauj, its ruler Rājyapāla made an abject submission. Enraged by this unworthy conduct of their suzerain, the chiefs of Northern India combined against Rājyapāla under the leadership of Ganda's son Vidyādhara. Rājyapāla could offer no resistance and was slain by Arjuna, the Kachchapaghata chief of Gwalior. When Sultan Mahmūd heard of this inhuman murder, he set out from Ghazni in 1019 to punish the wrong-doers, but Ganda fled in the night without encountering Mahmūd on the field of battle. A few years later Mahmūd again marched against him and compelled him to sign a treaty by which Ganda ceded the fort of Kalanjar and acknowledged his suzerainty.

After the death of Ganda the history of the Chandelas is a record of wars with the neighbouring states. The Kalachuris of Chedi defeated the Chandela king Kirtivarmadeva and deprived him of his kingdom, but the latter soon recovered his position through the assistance of his Brahman minister Gopāla. The Chandela power once again rose to its highest point under Madanavarman who was a contemporary of Kumarapāla of Gujarat and Govindachandra of Kanauj. Madana's eldest son died during his lifetime and he was succeeded by his grandson Parmardin.

With Parmardin's accession to power the Chandelas plunged into bitter and prolonged wars with the Chohāns of

Delhi. In 1182 he was completely defeated by Prithvirāja who followed him into the heart of his kingdom as far as Madanapur. He offered no help to Prithvirāja and Jayachandra when Muhammad of Ghor directed his arms against them. His own turn came in 1202 when Muhammad's general Qutbuddin attacked Kalanjar and inflicted a crushing defeat upon him. Parmardin heroically struggled to save his power but he fell in the fight. Henceforward the Chandelas ceased to have any political importance and a similar process of decadence overtook the Kalachuris of Chedi.

The Parmars of Malwa.

The Parmar kingdom of Malwa was founded by Krisṇa Raja *alias* Upendra in the ninth century A.D. The kings of Malwa were originally feudatories of the Gurjar-Pratihārs of Kanauj but towards the close of the tenth century Sīyak II established his independence. The kingdom of Malwa included a large part of the ancient kingdom of Avanti up to the Narbada in the south. Ceaseless wars were waged between the Parmars of Malwa, the Chandelas of Mahoba, the Kalachuris of Chedi, the Solankis of Gujarat and the Chalukyas of the Deccan. Munja who came to the throne in 974 A.D. inflicted several defeats upon the Chalukyas of the Deccan, but was himself fatally wounded by them during the years 993—97 A.D. He extended his patronage to men of letters, and authors like Padmagupta, Dhananjaya and Halāyudha lived at his court.

The most illustrious ruler of the dynasty was Munja's nephew Bhoja (1010—60 A.D.) who is known in history as a great warrior and patron of learning. He was himself a scholar and a poet, and established a Sanskrit college at Dhārā called the *Saraswati Kanthābharan*, the ruins of which exist to this day. In this college, he had several works on poetry, grammar, astronomy and other branches of learning incised on slabs of stone. The college was afterwards turned into a mosque by the Muslims. Bhoja also constructed a lake to the south

of Bhopal which extended over an area of 250 miles, the waters of which were afterwards drained by the Muslim rulers.

Towards the close of his life the enemies of Bhoja became very strong. He was defeated and slain in battle by Karna of Dahala and Bhīma of Gujarat. The Parmar power steadily declined after Bhoja's death, and the last king of the dynasty was compelled to embrace Islam by the generals of Alauddin Khilji, who effected the complete conquest of the entire province in 1310 A.D.

After the fall of the kings of Vallabhi the Chāpotakas or Chavaḍās ruled Gujarat for a long time, but towards the close of the ninth century it became a part of the empire of the Gurjar-Pratihārs of Kanauj. The Chalukya princes at first became the vassals of the empire, but in 943 A.D. a Chalukya prince Mūlrāja (960—95 A.D.) founded an independent dynasty called the Chalukya dynasty of Anahilapataka. The history of this dynasty is fully revealed in the works of contemporary Jain scholars. Mūlrāja conquered the Parmars of Ābu, and fought against Vigraharāja (Bīsaladeva II) who defeated him and devastated his kingdom. Better success attended his arms, when he marched against the combined forces of the chiefs of Sindh, Cutch and Vanthali in Kathiawad. Great valour was shown in this battle by the prince of Ābu who fought on the side of Mūlrāja. Mūlrāja built the great temple of Rudra-mahālaya, which was dedicated to Śiva at Siddhapur, but he did not live to finish it. The installation of the deity in the temple was celebrated with great splendour, and Brahmans from Thanesar, Kanauj, and other parts of North India were invited to assist in the solemn ceremony. Mūlrāja died in 995 and was succeeded by his son Chāmundarāja who slew in battle Sindhurāja, the Parmar king of Malwa, which led to bitter animosities between the two kingdoms.

The Solankis of Gujarat.

Chāmundarāja was succeeded by his son Vallabharāja, but he died after a short reign of six months. His son Durlabharāja, who was married to a Chohān princess of Nādol, reigned for 12 years (1009—21 A.D.), and after his death was succeeded by his nephew Bhīma I who is well-known in the annals of Gujarat.

Bhīma continued the bitter feud against the king of Malwa and invaded his territory. He humbled the Parmar ruler of Ābu, and made his power felt by the Chohāns of Nādol.

But a great calamity was in store for Bhīma. When Mahmūd of Ghazni invaded Gujarat in order to seize the vast wealth of the temple of Somnath, situated on the seacoast south of Kathiawad, Bhīma fled from his kingdom and sought refuge in a fortress in Cutch. After the departure of the Turkish invaders he recovered his country and rebuilt the desecrated temple of Somnath.

Bhīma died in 1063 A.D. and was succeeded by his third son Karna I who established order in the country by subduing the Kols and Bhils. His successor Jaya Singh, surnamed Siddharāja, who came to the throne in 1093, is one of the most remarkable Solanki kings of Gujarat. He inflicted a crushing defeat on the ruler of Malwa, annexed the country to his dominions, and assumed the title of king of Avanti. He fought against the Yadava prince of Girnar, suppressed the wild tribes, and defeated the Chohān prince of Ajmer with whom he afterwards made peace. Siddharāja was a just, kind and sagacious ruler. He extended his patronage to learned men, and showed special favour to Jain scholars, the chief of whom was Hemachandra or Hemācharya. He had no son, and therefore when he died in 1142, he was succeeded by Kumārapāla, a descendant of Karna, the third son of Bhīma I, of whom mention has been made before.

Kumārapāla is by common consent the most remarkable of all Solanki kings of Gujarat. He showed great respect to Hemachandra Suri, the learned Jain scholar, whom he elevated

to the position of chief minister. Kumārapāla invaded the territory of Ajmer twice. The first expedition was a failure, but in the second the Gujarat forces obtained a victory over the Chohān prince. The rulers of Malwa and Ābu were defeated, and Mallikārjuna, the chief of Konkan, had to acknowledge the supremacy of Kumarapāla. Thus the original kingdom of Gujarat was considerably enlarged, and certain portions of Malwa and Rajputana were included in it.

Kumarapāla was a patron of learning. Many scholars lived on his bounty, but those specially worthy of mention are the two Gujarati scholars Ramachandra and Udayachandra. His minister Hemachandra was a great scholar of Prakrit and Sanskrit, and composed a number of works on history and religion which were dedicated to the king. Kumarapāla embraced the Jain faith through the influence of Hemachandra, and forbade any kind of *himsā* (injury to living beings) throughout his wide dominions.

Kumarapāla died after a reign of nearly thirty-one years in 1173, and was succeeded by his nephew Ajayapāla. With Ajayapāla's accession to the throne began the decline of the kingdom which was further accelerated during the reigns of his weak successors Mūlrāja II and Bhīma II. The last Chalukya king was Tribhuvanapāla, a mere figurehead, from whom power was snatched by the Baghela branch of the Solankis some time about 1243 A.D. This dynasty produced a number of kings who were constantly troubled by the new invaders of India—the Muhammadans. The last king was Karna who was overpowered by Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan, the two famous generals of Alauddin Khilji, in 1296, and whose power was finally destroyed by Kāfūr in 1310 A.D. With Karna's defeat and death the line of the independent Solankis of Gujarat came to an end.

Besides Rajput kingdoms described before there were many others in Rajputana on the eve of Muhammadan conquest.

The chief of them were Mewar, Jesalmir, Bundi, Jalor and Nādol. The principality of Jodhpur was founded after Muhammad Ghori's conquest of Hindustan, and Amber (modern Jaipur) and Bikanir did not rise into prominence until the advent of the Mughals in the sixteenth century. The Rajputs of Mewar, Jesalmir, Ranthambhor and Jalor struggled hard with the early Turks and bravely opposed them on the field of battle. An account of these struggles will be given in subsequent pages.

Rajputana.

Bengal as far as Assam was included in the empire of Harṣa, but like other provinces it suffered after his death from anarchy and misrule. In the eighth century, the people, tired of disorder, elected Gopāla as their king. Gopāla was a Buddhist and he reigned for nearly 45 years over Magadha and South Bihar. His successor Dharmapāla defeated the ruler of Kanauj, and his suzerainty was acknowledged by the kings of Afghanistan, Punjab, certain portions of Rajputana and the Kangra Valley. He built also the magnificent monastery of Vikramaśīlā, which contained 107 temples and 6 colleges for education in Buddhism. Devapāla, the next ruler, is described as the most powerful ruler of the dynasty. He conquered Assam and Kalinga and waged ceaseless wars for the propagation of his faith. He received an embassy from the king of Java to obtain permission for building a temple of Buddha at Nalanda. Devapāla received the mission well, and granted five villages in the districts of Patna and Gaya for the maintenance of the temple, built by the Javanese king.

The Pāla and Sena kings of Bihar and Bengal.

After a reign of forty years the Pālas were temporarily overpowered by the hill tribe of the Kambojas. But the Kamboja rule was short-lived. Mahīpāla recovered the lost power of his house and sent a mission for the revival of Buddhism in Tibet. He was a staunch follower of Buddhism ; he built several buildings at Nālandā, Bodhgaya and Vikrama-

śīlā and repaired many Buddhist shrines. In 1084 Rāmapāla ascended the throne of his forefathers, and conquered Mithilā, and reduced the kings of Assam and Orissa to the position of tributaries. His son Kumārapāla turned out a weak ruler, and he found it impossible to keep the power of his dynasty intact. Sāmanta Sena, who probably came from the Deccan, seized a large part of the kingdom of Pālas, and laid the foundations of the new dynasty of Senas in Bengal towards the close of the eleventh century A.D. Sāmanta Sena's grandson, Vijaya Sena, conquered Western Bengal, and firmly established the power of his house. His successor Ballāla Sena came to the throne in 1155, and besides maintaining the dominion of his father intact, promoted learning, and introduced the practice of *Kulinism* among the Brahmans, the Vaidyas and the Kayasthas of Bengal. Brahmanism regained its ascendancy under him, and missions were sent abroad for propaganda work. Ballāla Sena was succeeded by Lakṣmana Sena in 1170. He succumbed to the raid of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khiljī in 1199, and a large part of Bengal passed into the hands of the Muslims.

Origin of the Rajputs.

The origin of the Rajputs is a matter of controversy. Historical ingenuity has been much exercised in determining with precision the origin of the Rajputs, and the difficulty has been considerably aggravated by the lofty pedigrees assigned to them in Brahmanical literature and the bardic chronicles. The Rajputs claim to be the lineal descendants of the Kṣhatriyas of Vedic times. They trace their pedigree from the sun and the moon, and some of them believe in the theory of *Agnikula*. The word Rajput, in common parlance, in certain states of Rajputana, is used to denote the illegitimate sons of a Kṣhatriya chief or jāgīrdār. But in reality it is the corrupted form of the Sanskrit word *Rājputra* which means a 'scion of the royal blood.' The word occurs in the Purāṇas, and is used in Bāṇa's *Harṣacharita*

in the sense of high-born Kṣhatriya—a fact which goes to show that the word was used in early times and in the seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era.

Much has been written about the origin of the Rajputs. Some hold them to be the descendants of the foreign settlers in India, while others trace their pedigree back to the Kṣhatriyas of Vedic times. Tod, the famous historian of Rājasthān, started the theory that the Rajputs were the descendants of the Scythians or Śakas who came into India about the sixth century A.D.

European scholars have accepted Tod's view of the origin of the Rajputs. Dr. Vincent Smith in his *Early History of India* (Revised edition, p. 425), speaking of the foreign immigration of the Śakas and the Yue-chi or Kushans in the second and first centuries B.C., writes :—

> "I have no doubt that the ruling families of both the Sakas and the Kushans, when they became Hinduised, were admitted to rank as Kṣhatriyas in the Hindu caste system, but the fact can be inferred only from the analogy of what is ascertained to have happened in later ages—it cannot be proved."

Dr. Smith dwells at length upon the effects of the Hūn invasions, and observes that they "disturbed Hindu institutions and the polity much more deeply than would be supposed from perusal of the Purāṇas and other literary works." He goes on to add that the invasions of foreign tribes in the fifth and sixth centuries shook Indian society in Northern India to its foundations, and brought about a re-arrangement of both castes and ruling families. This view is supported by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, and the editor of Tod's *Annals*, Mr. William Crooke, who writes in his Introduction that the origin of many Rajput clans dates from the Śaka or Kushan invasion, which began about the middle of the second century B.C., or, more

certainly, from that of the White Hūnas who destroyed the Gupta Empire about 480 A.D.

But in recent times certain Indian scholars have attempted in their researches to point out the error of Tod and other European scholars. Paṇḍit Gaurishankar Ojha discusses the question at length in his *History of Rajputana* and comes to the conclusion that the Rajputs are the descendants of the ancient Kṣhatriyas, and that Tod was misled by the similarities in the manners and customs of the Rajputs and the foreigners who settled in India.

One may or may not wholly agree with Mr. Ojha's view, but it is clear that the foreign tribes who settled in India made a fresh re-arrangement of social groups inevitable, and as possessors of political power they were connected with the ancient Kṣhatriyas by their Brahman advisers.

The theory of *Agnikula* that four Rajput clans—the Pawār (Pramār), Parihār (Pratihār), Chohān (Chahumāna) and Solankī or Chālukya—sprang from Vaśiṣṭha's sacrificial fount on mount Ābu in southern Rajputana, still finds credence among the Rajputs. Dr. Bhandarkar and others have found in this myth a confirmation of their theory of the foreign origin of the Rajputs. They hold that the *Agnikula* myth represents a rite of purgation by fire, the scene of which was in southern Rajputana, whereby the impurity of the foreigners was removed, and they became fitted to enter the caste system. The story of the *Agnikula* is related in the *Prithvīrāja Rāsau*. The *Rāsau*, whatever its date, contains many interpolations, and sometimes inextricably combines history with legend so that we cannot accept everything that it says as historical truth. The fictitious character of the story is obvious, and it is unnecessary to adduce evidence to prove it. It represents only a Brahmanical effort at finding a lofty origin for the people who stood very high in the social order, and whose munificence flowed in an unstinted measure to the priestly class, which

reciprocated that generosity with great enthusiasm. It will be absurd to contend that the Rajputs are the pure descendants of the Kṣhatriyas of the ancient Vedic times. The original Kṣhatriyas were mixed up with the hordes of immigrants who poured into India in the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. Dr. Smith writes that some of the Rajputs are descended from the indigenous tribes such as the Gonds and Bhārs—a fact which is borne out by the distinctions that still exist among them. It is too large an assumption, and is scarcely justified by the historical data available to us. There are similar distinctions among the Brahmans also, but that does not prove that certain Brahmans are descended from the lower orders in the Hindu social system. To make such a generalisation would be against all canons of historical research.

The various tribes of the foreign settlers became so deeply intermixed with one another in course of time that all marked dissimilarities were obliterated, and a certain kind of homogeneity was developed by the adoption of similar social customs and religious rites. The tribal individuality vanished, and a process of amalgamation set in which made scrupulous differentiation impossible. A high feeling of chivalry and honour, of independence and patriotism animated all Rajputs, and this sameness had much to do with the fusion of the various clans which had ethnologically stood apart from one another.

Art and Literature.

The architectural activity of the Hindus during this period was mainly confined to the building of temples. The most famous temples of the period in Northern India are those of Bhuvaneśvara, built in the seventh century A.D., of Khajurāho in Bundelkhand, and of Puri in Orissa. The Jain temple at Ābu was built early in the eleventh century, and is one of the most exquisite examples of Indian architecture of the pre-Musalman period. In the Deccan also numerous temples were built, the most famous of which are those built by the rulers of the

Hoysala dynasty. The first at Somanāthapur was built by Vināditya Ballāla in the eleventh century, the second at Belur by Viṣṇuvardhana Hoysala in the twelfth century, and the third at Halevid built by another prince of the same dynasty towards the close of the twelfth century. The Pallavas, Chalukyas, and Cholas were also great builders. The Pallavas adorned their capital Kānchī with beautiful temples, some of which belong to the seventh century A.D. The temple of Tanjore, which was built by Rāja Rāja Chola about 1090 A.D., bears testimony to the skill of the southern master-builders. The Chalukyas were also great patrons of art. They adorned their capital Bādāmi with magnificent temples and one of them, Vikramāditya II (733—47 A.D.), built the famous temple of Virūpākṣa at Pattadakal which was probably a recognised seat of learning in the South. The Hndu architecture is an expression of the Hindu religion. To the Hindu, his whole life is an affair of religion. It is his religion which regulates his conduct in every-day life, and its influence permeates through the various grades of the Hindu society. Nowhere is the religiousness of the Hindu more clearly manifest than in his architecture and sculpture, for it was through these, as a distinguished Indian scholar points out, that he sought to realise the all-embracing notion of his faith.

The temples, tanks and embankments of the Hindu kings were wonderful works of art. The Arab scholar Al-Beruni writes regarding them :—

> "In this they have attained to a very high degree of art, so that our people (the Muslims) when they see them, wonder at them, and are unable to describe them, much less to construct anything like them."

Even such an iconoclast as Mahmūd of Ghazni was moved with admiration, when he saw the beautiful temples of the city of Mathurā during one of his Indian raids—a fact which is recorded by his official chronicler, 'Utbi.'

The triumph of Brahmanism was followed by an enormous growth of religious and secular literature. The religious controversies of the time produced an abundance of philosophical literature of which the most important are the commentaries of Śankara on the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the *Brahmasūtra*. The court of Dhārā was adorned by such eminent literary men as Padmagupta, author of the *Navasāhasāṅkacharita*, Dhanañjaya, author of the Daśarūpaka, Dhanika, commentator of the *Daśarūpaka*, Halāyudha, commentator of *Piṅgalachhandaḥsūtra* and other works, and Amitagati, author of the *Subhāṣitaratnasandoh*. Among the dramatists of the period are Bhavabhūti, author of the *Mālatīmādhava*, the *Mahāvīracharita* and the *Uttararāmacharita*, who flourished in the eighth century A.D.; Viśākhadatta, author of the *Mudrārākṣhasa* and Bhatta Nārāyaṇa, author of the *Veṇīsaṁhāra* (800 A.D.) and Rājaśekhara, author of the *Karpūramañjarī* and other works, who wrote in the early part of the tenth century A.D.

The Kāvya literature also deserves a passing mention. Māgha's *Śiśupālabadha* is a well-known work which draws its materials from the Mahābhārata, and describes the story of the destruction of Śiśupāla by Kriṣṇa. Another *mahākāvya* of importance is the *Naiṣadhacharita* of Śrī Harṣa (1150 A.D.) which was written probably under the patronage of Jayachandra of Kanauj. Besides the Kāvyas proper there were written during this period historical Kāvyas. Among them the most remarkable are the *Navasāhasāṅkacharita* of Padmagupta who was a court poet of the king of Dhārā, and of whom mention has previously been made and the *Vikramāṅkacharita* of Bilhaṇa written to commemorate the exploits of Vikramāditya VI, the Chalukya ruler of Kalyan. The most remarkable historical work in verse is Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇī* composed in the middle of the twelfth century A.D. Kalhaṇa was a well-educated native of Kashmir who had taken part in the politics of his country, and

who was fully conversant with its affairs. He attempts to give his readers a complete history of Kashmir, and, though like all mediæval historiographers, he combines fact with fiction, he sincerely endeavours to consult the varied sources of history. Among the lyrical poets the most remarkable is Jayadeva, the author of the *Gīta Govinda*, who flourished in Bengal in the twelfth century, and of whom mention will be made in another chapter.

Social Life.

The institution of caste existed. The superiority of the Brahmans was acknowledged and the highest honours were accorded to them by kings as well as the common people. But the Rajputs were no less high in the social scale. Brave and warlike, the Rajput was ever devoted to the championship of noble causes. Tod has in his masterly way delineated the character of the Rajput in these words: "High courage, patriotism, loyalty, honour, hospitality and simplicity are qualities which must at once be conceded to them; and if we cannot vindicate them from charges to which human nature in every clime is obnoxious; if we are compelled to admit the deterioration of moral dignity from the continual inroads of, and their subsequent collision with, rapacious conquerors; we must yet admire the quantum of virtue which even oppression and bad example have failed to banish. The meaner vices of deceit and falsehood, which the delineators of national character attach to the Asiatic without distinction, I deny to be universal with the Rajputs, though some tribes may have been obliged from position to use these shields of the weak against continuous oppression."[1] The Rajput had a high sense of honour and a strict regard for truth. He was generous towards his foes, and even when he was victorious, he seldom had recourse to those acts of barbarity which were the inevitable concomitants of Muslim

[1] Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, edited by Crooke, II, p. 744.

conquest. He never employed deceit or treachery in war and scrupulously abstained from causing misery to the poor and innocent people. The test of the civilisation of a community, writes a great thinker, is the degree of esteem in which women are held in it. The Rajput honoured his women, and though their lot was one of "appalling hardship" they showed wonderful courage and determination in times of difficulty, and performed deeds of valour which are unparalleled in the history of the world. Their devotion to their husbands, their courage in moments of crisis—and these were unfortunately many in a Rajput woman's life—and their fearless example exercised a healthy influence on Rajput society in spite of the seclusion in which they were kept. But their noble birth, their devotion to their husbands, their high sense of honour, and their conspicuous resourcefulness and courage all combined to make their lives highly uncertain. The custom of "Jauhar" or self-immolation—though its cruelty seems revolting to us—had its origin in that high feeling of honour and chastity, which led Rajput women to sacrifice themselves in the extremity of peril, when the relentless invaders hemmed in their husbands on all sides, and when all chances of deliverance were lost.

But if the virtues of the Rajputs are patent, their faults are equally obvious. Their inconstancy of temper, their liability to emotion or passion, their clan-feeling, their perpetual feuds, their use of opium, their incapacity to present a united front to the common enemy—all these placed them in a highly disadvantageous position, when they were matched against foes of tougher stuff. The practice of infanticide was common amongts them, and female children were seldom suffered to exist even in the most respectable families. Equally baneful was the custom of *Sati* which resulted from time to time in the death of a number of women in royal households which were universally polygamous. The practice became so common that even women of ordinary status burnt themselves to death

sometimes of their own free will, but more often under the pressure of parents and kinsmen, obsessed by a false notion of family pride. The Rajput never had recourse to treachery or deceit in time of war and dealt fairly and honourably with his enemies. His wars did not disturb the ordinary husbandman in the peaceful pursuit of his occupation. Sieges, battles, massacres—all left him unmoved with the result that he became completely indifferent to political revolutions, and readily transferred his allegiance from one king to another.

The Hindu society was stirred by the religious movements of reformers like Rāmānujāchārya, who preached the cult of *Bhakti*, and whose teachings marked a reaction against Śankara's *Advaita* philosophy. He preached against Śankara's *Vedānta* and laid stress upon the attributes of a personal God who could be pleased by means of *Bhakti* or devotion. He formed a link between the north and south, and succeeded in establishing his spiritual hegemony over a considerable body of Hindus in both parts of the country. Pilgrimages became common, and men moved about visiting sacred places—a fact which imparted a great stimulus to the deep religious fervour which was at this time a remarkable feature of Hindu society. *Svayamvaras* were not frequently held, the last recorded one of importance being that of the daughter of Jayachandra of Kanauj, but *Sati* was common, and in beleaguered fortresses and cities no mercy was shown to the weaker sex when it fell into the hands of the enemy.

Rajput Government.

The government of the Rajputs was of a feudal character. The kingdom was divided into estates or fiefs held by Jāgīrdārs, who were often of the same family as the prince. The strength and security of the state depended upon their loyalty and devotion. The *khālsā* land of the state was directly under the prince and was administered by him. The nobles or their vassals were divided into several classes, and the etiquette of

each class was prescribed by immemorial usage which was scrupulously observed. The chief source of income was the revenue from the *khālsā* lands which was further increased by taxes on commerce and trade. The vassals or fief-holders of the prince had to render military service, when they were called upon to do so. They loved and honoured their prince and cheerfully followed him to the field of battle. They were bound to him by ties of personal devotion and service, and were ever anxious to prove their fidelity in times of difficulty or danger. No price could purchase them, and no temptation could wean them away from their chief. These feudal barons, if we may so call them, had to make payments to their chief resembling very much the feudal incidents of mediæval Europe. The Knight's fee and scutage were not unknown; feudal obligations were mutually recognised, and we often find that greedy rulers had recourse to scutage to obtain money. Such government was bound to be inefficient. It fostered individualism, and prevented the coalition of political forces in the state for a common end. The king was the apex of the system, and as long as he was strong and powerful, affairs were properly managed, but a weak man was soon reduced to the position of a political nullity. The internal peace of the state often depended upon the absence of external danger. When there was no fear of a foreign foe, the feudal vassals became restless, and feuds broke out between the various clans with great violence, as is shown by the feuds of the clans of Chondāwat and Saktāwat in the seventeenth century in the time of Jahangir.

The Deccan

The Chalukyas, who were a family of Rajput origion, entered the Deccan in the sixth century A.D. The most remarkable of the line was Pulakesin II who ascended the throne in 611 A.D. He waged

The Chalukyas.

ceaseless wars against the rulers of Gujarat, Rajputana, Malwa and Konkan and annexed the territories of the Pallavas of Vengi and Kānchīpura. His brother, who was originally appointed as the viceroy of the conquered territories, founded a separate kingdom known in history as that of the Eastern Chalukyas. In 620 A.D. Pulakesin repulsed the invasion of Harṣa of Kanauj, an achievement which was considered a remarkable feat of valour by his contemporaries. The Cholas and Pandyas also entered into friendly relations with Pulakesin. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who visited the Deccan in 639 A.D. was much impressed by his power and greatness.

But the perpetual wars of Pulakesin implied a heavy strain upon the military and financial resources of his empire. The Pallavas under Narasinhavarman inflicted a crushing defeat upon Pulakesin. Pulakesin's son Vikramāditya declared war upon the Pallavas and seized their capital Kānchī, and the struggle went on with varying success until a chieftain of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa clan supplanted the power of the Chalukyas.

The Rāṣṭrakūṭas.

The Rāṣṭrakūṭas were originally inhabitants of Mahārāṣṭra and are mentioned in the inscriptions of Aśoka as Rattas or Rathikas. Formerly they were subject to the Chalukyas of Bādāmi, but Dantidurga had established his independence after defeating the Chalukya ruler Kīrttivarman II. Dantidurga died childless, and was succeeded by his uncle Krisṇa I who considerably increased the territories inherited from his nephew. Krisṇa erected the beautiful rock-cut temple of Śiva at Ellura. His successors further extended their dominions by their conquests. Amoghavarṣa who came to the throne in 815-16 A.D. ruled over all the territories included in the kingdom of Pulakesin II. He defeated the Chalukyas of Vengi and founded the new capital Manyakheta or Malkhed in the Nizam's dominions. Amoghavarṣa professed the Jain faith. He extended his patronage

to Jain scholars, and it is said that an important work on the philosophy of the Jains of the Digambara sect was written during his reign. Amoghavarṣa retired from public work in his old age, and was succeeded by his son Krișṇa II who had married a daughter of the Chedis of Dahala. Krișṇa's successor Indra III allied himself with the Chedis by means of marriage, and with their aid he invaded the territories of the Gurjar-Pratihārs. He invaded Malwa, conquered Ujjain, and his troops ravaged the Gangetic plain. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Gujarat were reduced to submission, and the Gurjar-Pratihārs lost their power owing to his ceaseless attacks.

Under the successors of Indra III the power of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas declined. They exhausted their treasure on wars and thus crippled their resources. The Chalukyas gained fresh strength, and the last Rāṣṭrakūṭa monarch was defeated and killed in battle by Tailapa II in 892 A.D.

A new dynasty known as the Chalukyas of Kalyāṇī was founded, and the house of Rāṣṭrakūṭas under whom the temple at Ellura and frescoes of Ajanta were built and commercial relations with the Arabs were maintained came to an end.

The Western Chalukyas of Kalyāṇī.

Tailapa II proved a powerful and energetic ruler. He brought all the territories over which the Chalukyas had once ruled under his sway, and defeated Munja, the Parmar Raja of Dhārā. Tailapa found a formidable adversary in Rāja Rāja Chola who harried the Vengi territory after his death. But Tailapa's successor Someśvara, 'the wrestler in battle,' defeated the reigning Chola king, and also made successful attacks upon Dhārā and Kānchī. Vikramāditya VI who ascended the throne in 1076 had an unusually peaceful reign of fifty years. Art and literature flourished under him. Bilhaṇa, the poet, and the famous jurist Vijñāneshvara, the author of the *Mitākṣarā*, both wrote their works during his reign. After the death of Vikrama the power of the

Chalukyas began to decline rapidly. Bijjāla, a former minister of Tailapa, usurped authority and founded a new dynasty.

The usurpation of Bijjāla coincided with the revival of Śiva worship. Bāsava was the leader of the new movement. The Lingāyat sect flourished, gathered strength and considerably weakened the hold of Buddhism and Jainism. The Chalukyas tried once again to grasp the sceptre, but were unable to do so. The Deccan was divided between the Yādavas with their capital at Devagiri, the Kākatiyas at Warangal and the Hoysala Ballālas who ruled at Dwārsamudra.

These three powers contended for supremacy in the Deccan with the result that they weakened themselves and paved the way for the Muhammadans. Mālik Kāfūr, the famous general of Alauddin Khilji, defeated the powerful Yādava ruler and compelled the Kākatiyas and the Ballālas to render allegiance to Delhi.

The Far South.

In the earliest times there were three important kingdoms in the Far South, namely, the Pandya, the Chola and the Chera or Kerala. The Pandya kingdom covered the area now occupied by the Madura and Tinnevelly districts with portions of Trichinopoly and Travancore state. The Chola kingdom extended over Madras and several other British districts on the east as well as the territory now included in the Mysore state. The limits of the principality of Chera or Kerala cannot be defined with precision, but scholars are of opinion that it included approximately the Malabar districts and the greater part of the Cochin and Travancore states. The three kingdoms enjoyed a position of power and influence during the centuries before the Christian era, and had trade relations with ancient Rome and Egypt. But in the second century A.D. a new power rose into prominence and that was of the Pallavas, who ruled over the Telugu and west-coast districts from Vengipurā and Pala-

kaddu (Palghāt) respectively. They gradually increased their power in South India, overpowered the ancient kingdoms, and came into conflict with the Chalukyas. The Chalukya king, Pulakesin II, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Pallava ruler, Mahendravardhan I, and annexed the Vengi province to his dominions. Exasperated at the loss of an important part of their territory, the Pallavas organised their forces, and paid the Chalukya king in his own coin next year. These dynastic feuds were inherited by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, when they supplanted the Chalukyas in the Deccan in the middle of the eighth century A.D. Before the continued attacks of a youthful and vigorous dynasty, which had just emerged on the stage of history, the Pallavas found it difficult to defend themselves. Internal disorder together with the rebellion of the Southern Gangās accelerated the decline of the Pallavas ; and the supremacy of the South passed into the hands of the Cholas, and Rāja Rāja Chola, who assumed sovereign authority in 985 A.D., extended his conquests far and wide. By the end of 1005 A.D. he defeated all his rivals, and built for himself a magnificent empire. But the incessant strain of war proved too great even for this mighty ruler of the South, and in 1011 A.D. he sheathed his sword with pleasure, and devoted himself to the task of organising the administration. His son Rājendra Chola (1018—1042 A.D.) was, in accordance with the Chola custom, associated with him in the administration of the affairs of the kingdom. He turned out an able ruler and vigorously carried on the warlike policy of his father. His arms penetrated as far as the territory now occupied by the provinces of Prome and Pegu in modern Burma, and Bengal in the east. Orissa was overrun, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were also conquered. The Gangās of Mysore, who had given much trouble to the Pallavas, were also subdued ; and this astute ruler consummated his policy of aggrandisement by forming a matrimonial alliance with the Chalukya ruler of Kalyāṇī,

who was a formidable rival. The offspring of this marriage was Kulottunga I (1070—1118 A.D.) who united in his person the power of the Cholas and the Chalukyas.

After the death of Rājendra, the Chola kingdom began to decline ; and the neighbouring powers who had suffered much at the hands of its rulers now arrayed their forces against it. The Chola ruler was defeated by the Chalukya army, and this defeat led to the defining of the Chalukya and Chola frontiers. The Pandyas, the Cheras, and the Gangās withheld their allegiance, and the confusion into which the kingdom had fallen is illustrated by the fact that several rulers occupied the throne in quick succession only to be removed from power, either by military force or by assassination. In 1070 A.D. Someśvara II and his younger brother Vikramāditya contended for succession to the Chalukya throne, while Vīra Rājendra Chola had a powerful rival in Rājendra Chola of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty. Vikramāditya won a victory in this civil war ; he seized the Chalukya throne and restored his brother-in-law Ādhi-Rājendra Chola to his patrimony. But Ādhi-Rājendra who depended entirely upon Chalukya support failed to win the confidence of his subjects, and was shortly afterwards assassinated. He left no male heir and, therefore, the crown passed to Rājendra Chalukya who is better known as Kulottunga I (1070—1118 A.D.).

Kulottunga I, who was a capable ruler, established complete tranquillity throughout his wide dominions. He made large conquests, but he is distinguished from his predecessors by the care which he bestowed upon the organisation of the administration on a sound and efficient basis. Towards the close of his reign, the Hoysala Prince Bitti Deva, otherwise known as Viṣṇuvardhana (1100—1141 A.D.), drove out the Chola governors from the Gangā territory, and before his death, established his sway over the country now covered by the Mysore state.

The Pandyas, meanwhile, developed their power, and the Chola empire had to bear the blows of the Hoysalas, the Kākatiyas, and the Pandyas. The last powerful ruler of the Pandya dynasty was Sundaram Pandya,[2] who died in 1293 A.D. after having conquered the whole Tamil country and Ceylon. The great Venetian traveller Marco Polo, who visited South India in the thirteenth century, speaks of the great wealth and power of the Pandya king. But in 1310 A.D. Kāfūr's raids, backed by the fanaticism of the entire Muslim community, destroyed the political system of the South, and plunged the whole country into a state of utter confusion. The Chola and Pandya kingdoms rapidly declined in power, and were finally destroyed by Muslim attacks. The Deccan was not united again until the rise of the Vijayanagar kingdom in 1336 A.D.

[2] Marco Polo found him ruling at Madura.

CHAPTER II

THE ARAB INVASION OF SINDH

The Arabs.

The earliest Muslim invaders of Hindustan were not the Turks but the Arabs, who issued out from their desert homes after the death of the great Arabian Prophet to enforce belief at the point of the sword, which was, according to them, "the key of heaven and hell." Their zeal and vigour enabled them to make themselves masters of Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Persia within the short space of twenty years. The conquest of Persia made them think of their expansion eastward, and when they learnt of the fabulous wealth and idolatry of India from the merchants who sailed from Shiraz and Hurmuz and landed on the Indian coast, they recked little of the difficulties and obstacles which nature placed in their way, and resolved on an expedition to India. The first recorded expedition was sent from Umān to pillage the coasts of India in the year 636-37 A.D. during the Khilāfat of Omar. Plunder and not conquest was the objective of these early raids, but the task was considered so difficult and dangerous that the Khalifa disapproved of such distant campaigns and prohibited all further attempts in this direction. He had a great repugnance to naval expeditions, which is said to have been caused by the description of the sea furnished to him by one of his lieutenants, as "a great pool which some senseless people furrow, looking like worms upon logs of wood." But Omar's successors relaxed the prohibition, and expeditions were planned and undertaken, so that every year the Muslims marched from their homes in search of new countries. In 643-44 A.D. Abdulla bin Amar bin Rabi invaded Kirman, and marched towards Sistan or Siwistan, and besieged the ruler of the place in his capital and compelled

him to sue for peace. Peace being made, the victorious general proceeded towards Mekrān, where he was opposed by the combined forces of the rulers of Sindh and Mekrān, but the latter sustained a defeat in a night encounter. Abdulla wished to follow up his victory and to win further success on the other side of the Indus, but the cautious policy of the Khalifa stood in his way and forbade all further progress.

The arms of Islam achieved splendid success everywhere. Egypt, Syria, Carthage, Africa,—all were reached within a few years, and in 710 A.D. at the battle of Guadalete the Gothic kingdom was destroyed by the Moors, who established their own power in the country and introduced the elements of Arabian culture among the semi-civilised European races. Persia had already been overrun as far as the river Oxus, and attempts had been made to annex the lands beyond that river to the Caliphate. These eastern conquests greatly increased the power and prestige of the Khilāfat which attained to its pinnacle of fame under the Omayyads. Under Hajjāj, the governor of Irāq, who practically ruled over the entire country formerly comprised in the kingdom of Persia, and who was an imperialist to the core, the spirit of conquest found its fullest scope, and Bokhara, Khojand, Samarqand, and Farghānā were conquered by Muslim arms. Qutaiba was sent to Kashgar where a treaty was concluded with the native Chinese. An army was also sent against the king of Kabul and another to chastise the pirates of Debal[1] in Sindh, who had plundered eight vessels full of valuable presents sent by the ruler of Ceylon for the Khalifa and Hajjāj. But this punitive expedition against Debal, which the Khalifa had sanctioned at the special request of Hajjāj, failed, and the Arab general who

1 Thattā is synonymous with Debal. Mr. Abbott discusses the whole question at length in his interesting monograph on Sindh (pp. 43—55). Also see Major Raverty's translation of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri*, I, p. 295 (note 2).

captained it was defeated and put to death by the Sindhians. Struck with shame and humiliation at this disastrous failure, Hajjāj who was a man of sensitive nature vowed vengeance upon the Sindhians, and planned a fresh expedition, better organised and equipped than the previous one. It was entrusted to Muhammad bin Qasim who was pointed out by the astrologers as the luckiest man to be placed in charge of it.

Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion of Sindh, 712 A. D.

The story of Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion of Sindh is one of the romances of history. His blooming youth, his dash and heroism, his noble deportment throughout the expedition and his tragic fall have invested his career with the halo of martyrdom. Buoyed up with great expectations that were formed of him on account of his youthful and warlike spirit, this gallant prince started on his Indian expedition, well accoutred, with 6,000 picked Syrian and Irāqian warriors sent by Hajjāj, with an equal number of armed camel-riders and a baggage train of 3,000 Bactrian camels. Necessaries as well as luxuries were amply supplied by the Khalifa, who had appointed Muhammad bin Qasim more on the score of his kinship with him than mere personal merit. When Muhammad reached Mekran, he was joined by the governor, Muhammad Hārūn, who supplied reinforcements and five catapults which were sent to Debal with the necessary equipments. Besides these Arab troops, Muhammad bin Qasim enlisted under his banner a large number of the discontented Jats and Meds, who had old accounts to settle with the intolerant Hindu government which had inflicted great humiliations upon them. They had been forbidden to ride in saddles, wear fine clothes, to uncover the head, and this condemnation to the position of mere hewers of wood and drawers of water had embittered animosities to such an extent that they readily threw in their lot with the foreigner. Though Muhammad bin Qasim treated them with scant respect as soon as he had gained a foothold

in the country, this division of national sympathies was of great help to him in acquiring knowledge of the country with which his men were but imperfectly acquainted.

Muhammad reached Debal in the spring of 712 A.D. There he was reinforced by a large supply of men and munitions. Forthwith Muhammad's men set themselves to the task of digging entrenchments defended by spearmen, each body of warriors under its own banners, and the *manjnīq* called the "bride" was placed with 500 men to work it. There was a large temple at Debal on the top of which floated a red flag which was pulled down by the Muslims to the complete horror of the idolators. A hard fight ensued in which the Hindus were defeated by the Muslims. The city was given up to plunder, and a terrible scene of carnage followed, which lasted for three days. The governor of the town fled away without offering any resistance and left the field clear for the victorious general, who laid out a Muslim quarter, built a mosque and entrusted the defence of the city to a garrison of 4,000 men.

Having taken Debal by storm, Muhammad bin Qasim proceeded to Nirun,[2] the inhabitants of which purchased their freedom by furnishing supplies and making a complete surrender. He then ordered a bridge of boats to be constructed in order to cross the Indus. This unexpected move took Dāhir by surprise, and with his men he fell back upon Rāwar where he set his forces in order to fight against the enemy. Here the Arabs encountered an imposing array of war-elephants and a powerful army, thirsting to give battle to the Muslims under the command of Dāhir and his Thākurs (chiefs). A naphtha arrow struck Dāhir's howdah and set it ablaze. Dāhir fell upon the ground, but he at once raised himself up and had a scuffle with

2 Nirun was situated on the high road from Thattā to Haidrābād, a little below Jarak. (Elliot, I, pp. 396—401.)

an Arab, who "struck him with a sword on the very centre of his head and cleft it to his neck." Driven to despair by the death of their valiant king and leader, the Hindus assailed the Muslims with relentless fury, but they were defeated, and the faithful "glutted themselves with massacre." Dāhir's wife, Rānī Bāī, and his son betook themselves to the fortress of Rāwar, where the last extremity of peril called forth the shining qualities of those hapless men and women whom death and dishonour stared in the face. After the manner of her tribe, this brave lady resolved to fight the enemies of her husband. She reviewed the remnant of her garrison, 15 thousand in number in the fort, and forthwith stones from mangonels and balistas, as well as arrows and javelins, began to be rained down thickly upon the Arabs, who were encamped under the walls of the fort. But the Arabs proved too strong for the forlorn hope of Rāwar and conducted the siege with great vigour and intrepidity. When the Rānī saw her doom inevitable, she assembled all the women in the fort and addressed them thus :—"God forbid that we should owe our liberty to those outcaste cow-eaters. Our honour would be lost. Our respite is at an end, and there is nowhere any hope of escape ; let us collect wood, cotton and oil, for I think we should burn ourselves and go to meet our husbands. If any wish to save herself, she may." They entered into a house where they burnt themselves, and by means of this ghastly holocaust vindicated the honour of their race.

Muhammad took the fort, massacred the 6,000 men whom he found there, and seized all the wealth and treasure that belonged to Dāhir. Flushed with success, he proceeded to Brahmanabad[3] where the people at once submitted to him. A

[3] It is a ruined city in the Sinjhoro Taluka of Thar and Parkar, district Sindh, Bombay, situated in 25° 52′ N. and 68° 52′ E., about 11 miles south-east of Shahdadpur in Haidrābād, and 21 miles from Hāla Imperial Gazetteer, IX, p. 8.

settlement of the country followed immediately; those who embraced Islam were exempted from slavery, tribute and the Jeziya, while those who adhered to the faith of their fathers had to pay the poll-tax, and were allowed to retain possession of their lands and property. The poll-tax was levied according to three grades. The first grade was to pay silver equal to forty-eight dirhams, the second grade twenty-four dirhams, and the lowest grade twelve dirhams. When the people of Brahmanabad implored Muhammad bin Qasim to grant them freedom or worship, he referred the matter to Hajjāj, who sent the following reply :—" As they have made submission and have agreed to pay taxes to the Khalifa, nothing more can be properly required from them. They have been taken under our protection and we cannot, in any way, stretch out our hands upon their lives or property. Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like."[4] Muhammad bin Qasim then devoted himself to the settlement of the country. The whole population was divided into four classes and twelve dirhams' weight of silver was allotted to each man because their property had been confiscated. The Brahmans were treated well and their dignity was maintained. They were entrusted with offices in the administration and the country was placed under their charge. To the revenue officers Muhammad said : " Deal honestly between the people and the Sultan, and if distribution is required, make it with equity, and fix the revenue according to the ability to pay. Be in concord among yourselves and oppose not each other, so that the country may not be distressed. Religious freedom was granted and in the matter of worship the wishes of the Brahmans were respected.

[4] Chāchnāmā, Elliot, 1, pp. 185-86.

The victory of Brahmanabad was followed by the conquest of Multan, the chief city of the upper Indus. The garrison in the fort was put to the sword, and the families of the chiefs and warriors of Multan were enslaved. The people of Multan, merchants, traders, and artisans, together with the Jats and Meds of the surrounding country, whom the native government had persecuted, waited upon the conqueror and paid him homage. The usual settlement of territory followed, and Muhammad bin Qasim granted toleration to all unbelievers and spared their lives on payment of the Jeziya. Having conquered Multan, he sent one of his generals, Abu Hakim, at the head of ten thousand horse towards Kanauj, but before he could open a fresh campaign, he received from the Khalifa the ominous decree of his doom.

The death of Muhammad bin Qasim.

But all these glorious conquests spelled disaster for Muhammad, and nothing availed to save him from the tragic fate that awaited him. His fall was as sudden as his meteoric rise. When the captive daughters of Raja Dāhir, Parmal Devi and Suraj Devi, were presented to the Khalifa to be introduced into his seraglio, the princesses, in order to avenge their father's death, invented the story, that before sending them to the Khalifa Muhammad bin Qasim had dishonoured them both, suggesting thereby that they were unfit for the commander of the faithful. The Khalifa[5] lost his temper, and peremptorily issued an order that Muhammad bin Qasim should be sewn in the raw hide of an ox and be sent to the capital. So great was the might and majesty of the Khalifa that Muhammad on receipt of this order voluntarily sewed himself in raw hide, and Mīr Māsūm writes that " three days afterwards, the bird of life left his body and flew to

5 The Khalifa's name was Walid ibn-Abdul Malik. He became Khalifa in 86 A.H. (705 A.D.) and died in 96 A.H. (715 A.D.).

heaven." His dead body, enclosed in a box, was sent to the Khalifa, who ordered it to be opened in the presence of the daughters of Dāhir. The princesses expressed unalloyed satisfaction at the death of their father's murderer, but told the Khalifa that he was innocent. The Khalifa was struck with remorse; but how could he make amends for his mistake? He ordered the princesses to be tied to the tails of horses and be dragged until they were dead.[6] Thus perished the young hero, who had, in the short space of three years, conquered Sindh and established the Khalifa's sway on Indian soil. This story partakes of the nature of a myth. There is a great disagreement among our authorities on the point of Muhammad bin Qasim's death, but the account of *Futuhu-i-Buldan,* which says that Muhammad was seized, put in chains and tortured to death by the order of the Khalifa, seems to be more probable than the rest.

As a matter of necessity rather than of choice, the administration was left in the hands of the natives. The conquest placed plenty of land in the hands of the Arabs. The *iqtās* were held by grantees on the condition of military service and were exempt from all taxes except the alms (*Sadqah*). The Muslim soldiers were not allowed to cultivate lands, and therefore the main burden of agricultural labour fell upon the natives who were 'reduced to the condition of villeins and serfs.' Some soldiers held grants of land while others received fixed salaries. As laid down in the sacred law, four-fifths of the spoils was given to the troops and one-fifth was

The Arab occupation of Sindh.

6 Mīr Māsūm writes that after two months, the princesses were presented to the Khalifa and an interpreter was called in. When the veil was removed from their faces, the Khalifa fell in love with them. They told him that Muhammad had kept them for three days in his *haram*. (Tarikh-i-Māsūmī, Khudābakhsha, MS. F. 15.)

Some modern writers are of opinion that this story is a myth. Whether the story is true or false there is no doubt about Muhammad's tragic fall.

kept for the Khalifa and it appears that the Khalifas observed this rule, because they were afraid of the opposition of these military men. Religious endowments were made, and land was given in *waqf* (free-gift) to holy men and heads of monasteries. The Arab soldiers settled in the country, married Indian women and thus slowly a number of small military colonies came into existence, where in the enjoyment of domestic happiness these men forgot the pain of exile.

The Arabs were not so fanatical as the Turks who followed them later. They granted toleration to the Hindus. They did so not because they felt respect for other faiths, but because they were convinced of the impossibility of suppressing the faiths of the conquered peoples. At first there was a fearful outbreak of religious bigotry in several places, and temples were wantonly desecrated. The temple of the Sun at Multan was ravaged, and its treasures were rifled by Muhammad bin Qasim. But later, toleration was granted to the vanquished population and freedom of worship was allowed.

The principal sources of revenue were the land-tax and the Jeziya. The land-tax was rated at two-fifths of the produce of wheat and barley, if the fields were watered by public canals, and one-fourth if unirrigated. Of dates, grapes and garden produce one-third was taken, either in kind or cash, and one-fifth of the yield of wines, fishing, pearls and of other produce, not derived from cultivation. Besides these, there were several other taxes, which were generally farmed out to the highest bidder. Some of the tribes had to comply with demands which carried much humiliation with them. At one time the Jats, living beyond the river Aral, had to bring a dog when they came to pay their respects to the governor and were branded on the hand. Sumptuary laws were rigorously enforced, and certain tribes were forbidden to wear fine apparels, to ride on horses and to cover their heads and feet. Theft by the subject race was held to be a serious crime, and it was punished by burning

to death the women and children of the thief. The native population had to feed every Muslim traveller for three days and nights, and had to submit to many other humiliations which are mentioned by the Muslim historians. The Jeziya was always exacted "with rigour and punctuality, and frequently with insult." The unbelievers, technically called *Zimmīs*, had to pay according to their means, and exemption was granted to those who embraced Islam. There were no tribunals for deciding cases between the Hindus and Muslims. The amirs and chiefs, who still maintained their independence, exercised the right of inflicting capital punishment upon offenders within their jurisdiction. The Qazi decided cases according to the principles of the Quran, and the same practice was followed in cases between the Hindus and the Muslims, which, of course, resulted in great injustice to the former. In the matter of public and political offences, the law made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims, but all suits relating to debts, contracts, adultery, inheritance, property and the like, were decided by the Hindus in their *panchāyats* or arbitration boards which worked with great efficiency. The public tribunals were to the Hindus 'only the means of extortion and forcible conversion.' They always fretted and chafed under the foreign tutelage, but their own disunion was responsible for it. The absence of that bond of sympathy between the conqueror and the conquered, which arises from mutual confidence, was a conspicuous feature of the Arab administration in Sindh.

The impermanence of Arab conquest.

The conquest was accomplished by tribes who were so different in their habits and sentiments that they could never act in unison. When religious fanaticism had subsided, they "showed themselves as utterly incapable, as the shifting sands of their own desert, of coalescing into a system of concord and subordination." The hereditary feuds among the various clans further weakened their position, which was rendered

worse by the persecution of the Shias and several other heretical sects. The Arab conquest, as Stanley Lane-Poole rightly observes, was only "an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results." The province of Sindh was well-known for the infertility of its soil, and the Arabs soon discovered that it was an unremunerative appanage of the Khilāfat. The Hindu world, deeply conservative and philosophical, treated with supreme disdain the wealth and greatness of its physical conquerors, so that the even tenor of Hindu life was not at all disturbed by this "barbarian inroad." It was impossible for the Arabs to found a permanent power in India, for the Rajputs still held important kingdoms in the north and east, and were ever ready to contest every inch of ground with any foreign intruder who ventured to invade their territory. Muhammad bin Qasim's work of conquest was left uncompleted, and after his death the stability of the Arab position was seriously shaken owing to the ineffectual aid which the Khalifas sent to their representatives in that inhospitable region. The decline in the power of the Khilāfat seriously affected its possessions abroad, and the distant provinces gradually ceased to respect the authority of the imperial government. Sindh was divided into several petty states which were practically independent. The Arabs who settled in Sindh established their own dynasties, and the chiefs of the Saiyyad families exercised authority over the upper and the lower Indus. Only a few settlements and a few families constituted the memorial of Arab conquest in India. The Arabs have left no legacy behind in the shape of buildings, camps, and roads. Language, architecture, art, tradition, customs, and manners were little affected by them, and all that remained was the *débris* of ancient buildings, which proclaimed to the world the vandalism of their destroyers. Out of the materials of the buildings which they demolished they built castles, cities and fortresses which have been destroyed by the ravages of time.

The cultural effect of the Arab conquest.

It may be conceded at once that the Arab conquest of Sindh, from the political point of view, was an insignificant event in the history of Islam. But the effects of this conquest upon Muslim culture were profound and far-reaching. When the Arabs came to India, they were astonished at the superiority of the civilisation which they found in the country. The sublimity of Hindu philosophical ideas and the richness and versatility of Hindu intellect were a strange revelation to them. The cardinal doctrine of Muslim theology that there is one God, was already known to the Hindu saints and philosophers and they found that in the nobler arts, which enhance the dignity of man, the Hindus far excelled them. The Indian musician, the mason, and the painter were as much admired by the Arabs as the philosopher and the man of learning. The Arabs learnt from the Hindus a great deal in the practical art of administration, and the employment of Brahman officials on a large scale was due to their better knowledge, experience, and fitness for discharging efficiently the duties of administration. Muslim historians are apt to forget or minimise the debt which the Saracenic civilisation owed to Indo-Aryan culture. A great many of the elements of Arabian culture, which afterwards had such a marvellous effect upon European civilisation, were borrowed from India. The court at Baghdad extended its patronage to Indian scholarship, and during the Khilāfat of Mansūr (753—774 A.D.) Arab scholars went from India to Baghdad, who carried with them two books, the *Brahma Siddhānta* of Brahmagupta and his *Khānda-ḳhādyaḳa,* which were translated into Arabic with the help of Indian scholars. It was from them that the Arabs learnt the first principles of scientific astronomy.[7] The cause of Hindu learning received much encouragement from the ministerial family of the Barmaks

[7] Al-Beruni, India, translated by Sachau, Introduction, p. xxxi.

during the Khilāfat of Hārūn (786—808 A.D.). They invited Hindu scholars to Baghdad, and appointed them as the chief physicians of their hospitals, and asked them to translate from Sanskrit into Arabic works on medicine, philosophy, astrology and other subjects. When the Khilāfat of Baghdad lost its importance after the extinction of the Abbāsid dynasty at the hands of Halāgū, the Arab governors of Sindh became practically independent. The cultural connection was broken and the Arab scholars, no longer in contact with Indian *savants*, turned to the study of Hellenic art, literature, philosophy and science. We may endorse Stanley Lane-Poole's view that the conquest of Sindh produced no permanent political results, but it must be added that the Arabs derived much benefit from the culture and learning of the Hindus.

CHAPTER III

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GHAZNAVIDES

The advance of the Turks.

The Arab invasion was a failure because it was directed against a barren and unproductive province. The progress of Islamic conquest was checked for the time, but it was resumed with great zeal and earnestness in the tenth century by the Turks who poured into India from beyond the Afghan hills in ever-increasing numbers. After the fall of the Omayyads in 750 A.D., the Abbasides who succeeded to the Khilāfat transferred the capital from Damascus to Al-Kufa, and removed all distinctions between the Arabs and the non-Arabs. The Khilāfat now lost its sole spiritual leadership in the Islamic world; and its authority was circumscribed by the independent dynasties that had lately come into existence. The Arabs had now sunk into factious voluptuaries, always placing personal or tribal interests above the interests of Islam. The Abbasides accelerated the process of decadence by systematically excluding the Arabs from office. The provincial governors showed a tendency towards independence, as the central government became weaker and weaker. The barbarian Turkish guards whom the Khalifas employed to protect their person grew too powerful to be controlled, and the latter became mere tools in their hands. The Turks grew in importance from Egypt to Samarqand, and when the Samānid kingdom was overthrown by them, they founded small principalities for themselves. The more ambitious of these petty chiefs turned to India to find an outlet for their martial ardour and love of conquest. In 933 A.D. Alaptagin seized Ghazni where his father had been governor under the Samānids and established his own independent power.

After his death in 976 A.D. the kingdom of Ghazni passed into the hands of Subuktagin. As he seemed to be a man of promise, Alaptagin had gradually raised him to posts of trust, and conferred upon him, in course of time, the title of *Amir-ul-Umra*. Subuktagin was a talented and ambitious ruler. Not content with the petty kingdom of his master, he organised the Afghans into a compact body, and with their help conquered Lamghan and Sistan, and extended the sphere of his influence. The Turkish attacks upon the Samānid power further gave him the long-desired opportunity of securing the province of Khorasan for his son Mahmud in 994 A.D.

Amir Subuktagin —The First Invasion of Hindustan.

Eager to acquire religious merit, Subuktagin turned to the conquest of India, a country of idolators and infidels. Jayapāla, whose kingdom extended from Sarhind to Lamghan and from Kashmir to Multan, was the first Indian ruler likely to check his advance. When the Afghans encamped on the border of the Lamghan territory, Jayapāla, who was frightened beyond measure on seeing the heavy odds arrayed against him, sued for peace, and offered to pay tribute in acknowledgment of the conqueror's sovereignty. Mahmud dissuaded his father from acceding to these terms of peace, and urged battle for "the honour of Islam and of Musalmans." Jayapāla, however, renewed his overtures and sent the following message to Subuktagin :—"You have seen the impetuosity of the Hindus and their indifference to death, whenever any calamity befalls them, as at this moment. If, therefore, you refuse to grant peace in the hope of obtaining plunder, tribute, elephants, and prisoners, then there is no alternative for us but to mount the horse of stern determination, destroy our property, take out the eyes of our elephants, cast our children into the fire, and rush on each other with sword and spear, so that all that will be left to you, is stones and dirt, dead bodies, and scattered bones."

At this, peace was made, and Jayapāla bound himself to pay a tribute of a million dirhams, 50 elephants, and some cities and fortresses in his dominions. But he soon changed his mind and cast into prison two officers sent by Subuktagin to see that he made good his promise. When the Amir heard of this breach of faith, he hastened with his army towards Hindustan to punish Jayapāla for his 'wickedness and infidelity.' Jayapāla received help from his fellow-princes of Ajmer, Delhi, Kalanjar, and Kanauj, and at the head of a hundred thousand men he advanced to meet the invader on the same field of battle.

The Second Invasion.

The issue of the battle was a foregone conclusion. Subuktagin urged his fanatical followers to fight as well as they could for the honour of the faith. The Hindus were defeated in a sharp engagement. Subuktagin levied a heavy tribute and obtained an immense booty. His sovereignty was acknowledged, and he appointed one of his officers to the government of Peshawar. India was not conquered but the Muslims discovered the way that led to her fertile plains. After ruling his subjects with prudence and moderation for twenty years, Subuktagin died in August 997 A.D., leaving a large and well established kingdom for his son Mahmud.

Mahmud of Ghazni—His early ambitions.

After the death of Subuktagin, the sceptre of Ghazni passed into the hands of his eldest son, Mahmud, who quickly attained to the position of one of the mightiest rulers of Asia, famed in far-off lands for his riches, valour, and justice. To the qualities of a born soldier, he added boundless religious zeal which has ranked him among the great leaders of Islam. Mahmud was indeed a fierce and fanatical Muslim with an insatiable thirst for wealth and power. Early in life he formed the grim resolve of spreading the faith of the Prophet at the point of the sword, and his investiture by the Khalifa further

sharpened his zeal. To such a greedy iconoclast, India with her myriad faiths and fabulous wealth presented a favourable field for the exercise of his religious and political ambitions. Again and again, he led *jihads* against the Hindus, bringing back with him vast booty obtained by the plundering Turkish hordes who followed him into Hindustan.

Having settled the affairs of his kingdom, Mahmud turned his attention towards Hindustan, and led as many as seventeen invasions during the years 1000—1026 A.D. The first expedition in 1000 A.D. resulted in the capture of several frontier fortresses and districts which were entrusted by Mahmud to his own governors.

His Expeditions —The first raid on frontier towns.

Next year he again set out from Ghazni at the head of ten thousand picked horsemen. Thereupon, Jayapāla, the Raja of Bhatinda, mustered all his forces, and on the 8th Muharram, 392 A.H. (November 28, 1001 A.D.), a severe action was fought at Peshawar, in which the Musalmans defeated the Hindus. Jayapāla was captured with his kinsmen and an immense booty fell into the hands of the conqueror. The former agreed to give fifty elephants and his son and grandson as hostages for fulfilling the conditions of the peace. But Jayapāla personally preferred death to dishonour and perished in the flames to save himself from humiliation.[1]

Against Jayapāla, the Raja of Bhatinda.

The third expedition was aimed against the city of Bhīrā (1004-05 A.D.) on the left bank of the Jhelam below the Salt Range, which was soon annexed to the kingdom of Ghazni. Abul Fatah Daud, the heretic ruler of Multan, purchased pardon by promising an annual tribute of twenty thousand golden dirhams,

Against Bhīrā and other towns.

[1] Firishta writes that a custom prevailed among the Hindus that when a Raja was overpowered twice by strangers, he became disqualified to reign.

when he learnt of the defeat of Jayapāla's son Ānandapāla near Peshawar. Mahmud entrusted his Indian possessions to Sevakapāla, a Hindu convert, and returned to Ghazni, but as soon as the conqueror turned his back, Sevakapāla abjured Islam and withheld allegiance to Ghazni. Thereupon, Mahmud marched against him and defeated him. He was compelled to pay 400 thousand dirhams as penalty for his disloyalty and bad faith.

Against Ānandapāla.

The sixth expedition (1008-09 A.D.) was aimed against Ānandapāla for having assisted Daud of Multan in his treasonable designs. Ānandapāla like the gallant Rana Sanga of Mewar organised a confederacy of the Rajas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalanjar, Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer and marched towards the Punjab to give battle to the invader. The response to the appeal of the Punjab chief showed that the Rajput princes were fully alive to the danger to their civilisation. The high and low, the rich and the poor, were all stirred to heroic action. The Muslim historian writes that Hindu women 'sold their jewels and sent the money from distant parts to be used against the Musalmans.' The poorer women worked day and night at the spinning wheel or as hired labourers to be able to send something to the men of the army. The Khokhars also threw in their lot with the Hindus.

Mahmud's archers were repulsed by the bareheaded and barefooted Khokhars who rushed fearlessly into the thick of the fight and slew and smote three or four thousand Musalmans. Dismayed by this furious charge, the Sultan was about to stop the fight, when suddenly Ānandapāla's elephant took fright and fled from the field of battle. The Hindus were panic-stricken and the Ghaznavide army pursued them for two days

(Briggs, I, p. 38.) Utbi also refers to this custom though with a slight variation. (Elliot, II, p. 27.)

and nights. Many were put to death and enormous booty fell into the hands of the victors.

The Conquest of Nagarkot, 1008-09 A.D.

Flushed with success, Mahmud marched against the fort of Kangra, also known as Nagarkot or Bhimnagar.[2] The fortress was reputed to hold untold treasures, all dedicated to Hindu gods. When the Muhammadans besieged the fortress, the Hindus opened the gates out of fear, and Mahmud easily captured it and seized immense booty. The Sultan returned in triumph to Ghazni with a vast collection of jewels which far exceeded the treasures of the mightiest kings of the world.

Causes of his rapid Success.

The acquisition of vast treasures whetted the rapacity of Mahmud's followers, and they repeated their raids with a remarkable frequency. The dissensions of the Hindus, though they were numerically superior to the invaders, made their task easy. There was little feeling of national patriotism in the country. The masses were indifferent to political revolutions. Whenever a confederacy was organised, its members often fell out among themselves, and the pride of the clan or the tribe interfered with the discipline of the coalition and paralysed the plans of leaders. Self-interest always predominated over the interests of Hindustan, while the Muslims never experienced dearth of recruits owing to their boundless fanaticism.

After the conquest of Ghor, Mahmud marched towards Multan in 1010 A.D., and defeated and punished the rebellious chief Daud. Three years later he proceeded against Bhimapāla, captured his fortress and seized vast booty. The Muslims pursued the Raja who fled to Kashmir. Mahmud appointed his

[2] Kangra is a most fertile plateau in the Himalayas with a snow-clad range at its back and with perennial streams running through it into three or four rivers. The fort of Kangra was permanently conquered by Jahangir in 1621.

own governor, and after plundering Kashmir and forcing a great many people to embrace Islam he returned to Ghazni.

But far more important than these raids was his expedition against Thanesar in the year 1014 A.D. The Hindus fought desperately against the invaders but they were defeated, and the fort of Thanesar with a large booty fell into the hands of the conqueror.

Against Thanesar.

Ardent spirits offered themselves as volunteers to fight in the crusades against infidelity, and the armies of Mahmud soon swelled to enormous dimensions. Mahmud now determined to invade Kanauj, renowned in the East as the imperial Kṣhatriya capital of Hindustan. In 1018 A.D. he started from Ghazni and crossed the Jamna on the 2nd December, 1018 A.D. He captured all the forts that blocked his way. The Raja of Baran (Bulandshahr) tendered his submission and according to Muslim historians with ten thousand men embraced Islam. The Sultan then marched against the chief of Mahāwan on the Jamna. The Hindus put forth a gallant fight but they were defeated. The Raja killed himself to escape humiliation, and an enormous booty fell into the hands of the Sultan who now proceeded against Mathura, the sacred city of the Hindus, which, according to the Muslim historian, was unrivalled in population and edifices, and the wonderful things which it contained could not be described by the tongue of man. Muslim iconoclasm proved too much for the defenders, and the exquisite temples were razed to the ground by the orders of the conqueror.

The Conquest of Kanauj.

Mahmud, then, proceeded against Kanauj and appeared before its gates in January 1019 A.D. Rajyapāla, the Pratihar Raja of Kanauj, however, submitted without offering any resistance. The Sultan sacked the whole town and destroyed the temples, seizing an enormous amount of their wealth. Passing

through the country of Bundelkhand, Mahmud returned to Ghazni.

The abject surrender of Rajyapāla gave offence to his fellow Rajput princes, and Vidyādhara, son of the Chandela Raja of Kalanjar, attacked Rajyapāla and slew him in battle. Resenting the murder of his vassal, Mahmud left Ghazni in 1019 A.D. to chastise the Chandela Prince. The Chandela Raja was ready for battle with a huge army, but he was curiously struck with a panic, and luckily for Mahmud fled from the field of battle, leaving his entire baggage for the invaders. In 1021-22 A.D. Mahmud again returned to India and after compelling the submission of the chief of Gwalior proceeded towards Kalanjar. The Chandela Raja elected to conclude a peace with the Sultan. Having accepted immense riches and jewels, Mahmud victoriously returned to Ghazni.

The Defeat of the Chandela Prince.

But the most momentous expedition was aimed against Somnath in the year 416-17 A.H. (1025-26 A.D.). Having heard of the fabulous wealth which this temple was supposed to contain, Mahmud resolved to proceed against it. Marching through difficult country by way of Ajmer, he stood before the gates of Somnath[3] in a few days. He invested the fortress which stood on the sea-shore and was washed by the waves. The Rajput princes, from far and near, gathered to protect their cherished idol. When the Muslims began the attack, the Hindus repelled the assault with stubborn courage, and when the besiegers tried to scale the walls next morning, the defenders hurled them down with irresistible force. Mahmud was filled with dismay; but when he addressed a fervent appeal to God

Expedition against Somnath.

[3] The temple of Somnath was situated in Kathiawad in Gujarat. The old temple is in ruins and a new temple has been built by Ahalyabai near the site of the old, but the grandeur of the temple is still indicated by the ruins that exist.

for assistance, the hearts of the followers of Mahmud were touched. With one voice they declared their resolve to fight and die for him.

The battle raged loud and fierce and a scene of terrible carnage followed, and about 5,000 Hindus were slain. Mahmud then entered the temple and broke the idol into pieces. He ordered some fragments of the idol to be sent to Ghazni where they were thrown down at the threshold of the great mosque to give satisfaction to the true believers. It is related that when Mahmud was thus breaking the idol, the priests offered him immense wealth, only if he spared what remained of their god, but he replied that he wished to be known in the world as Mahmud, the breaker of idols and not as Mahmud, the seller of idols.[4] All appeals for pity, all offers of wealth made by the priests in charge of the temple produced no effect on this relentless fanatic, who by another blow broke the sacred *lingam* into pieces. The Muslim soldiers of Mahmud ruthlessly sacked the temple and easily obtained possession of a large heap of diamonds, rubies and pearls of incalculable value.[5]

Thus did Mahmud figure in the eyes of his followers as a devoted champion of the faith. They followed him uncomplainingly wherever he led them. The Raja of Nehrwala

[4] Mr. Habib's statement that the offer of the Brahmans and Mahmud's rejection of the offer is a fable of later days lacks confirmation by Muslim authorities. There is no improbability in the offer made by the Brahmans. (Habib, *Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin*, p. 53.)

Mr. Nāzim in his *Sultan Mahmud* (p. 118) writes:

"When he saw the idol, he ordered the upper part to be disfigured with pick-axes and a fire to be lighted round it so as to break it into small pieces. The temple was then divested of its wealth which is said to have amounted to 20,000,000 dīnārs, and was burnt to the ground."

[5] Firishta's story that the idol of Somnath was hollow does not seem to be correct. Al-Beruni says the *lingam* was made of solid gold.

was attacked next for taking part in the defence of Somnath. He fled and his country was easily conquered. This was followed by the subjugation of the Bhatti Rajputs. On his return journey Mahmud was much troubled by Bhima Deva, the chief of Gujarat, and the troops suffered considerably in the Ran of Kutch. He adopted a more westerly route and proceeded to Ghazni by way of Sindh.

Against the Jats.

The last expedition of Mahmud was undertaken to chastise the Jats of the Salt Range as they had molested the Muslim army on its return journey from Somnath. The Jats were defeated and many of them were put to the sword.

Achievement of Mahmud.

Mahmud was a great king. It was no mean achievement to develop a small mountain principality into a large and prosperous empire by sheer force of arms. It is true, the fall of the Samānids, the dissensions of the Hindu princes, the waning power of Persia and the boundless fanaticism of the Turks—callow converts to Islam—all these were factors which favoured his rise and contributed to his success. The permanent conquest of Hindustan was impossible, and that was not the objective of the Sultan. Besides, the Turks still fondly looked back to their hilly native land, and found the sultry climate of India unbearable. All that Mahmud wanted was the vast wealth which India possessed, and when this was obtained, he returned to Ghazni, unmindful of annexation or permanent conquest. But, still, the task was formidable, and Mahmud was made of the stuff of which martyrs are made. His expeditions testify to his boldness of conception, vigour of mind and undaunted courage against heavy odds. A born military leader, he never shrank from war, always sustained in his endeavours by the thought that he was fighting for the glory of Islam. He died in April 1030 at Ghazni at the age of sixty, leaving untold treasures and vast possessions behind.

Estimate of Mahmud.

Although a great conqueror, Mahmud was no barbarian. Himself illiterate, he appreciated the works of art, and drew around himself by means of his lavish generosity a galaxy of eminent poets and scholars among whom were some leading figures of the eastern world of letters, such as the versatile Al-Beruni, the mathematician, philosopher, astronomer and Sanskrit scholar; 'Utbi, the historian, Farābi, the philosopher, and Baihāki whom Stanley Lane-Poole aptly describes as the "oriental Pepys." It was an age of poetry, and some of the poets who lived at Muhamud's court were wellknown all over Asia. Among these were 'Unsuri, the poet-laureate of Ghazni, Farrukhi, and Asjadi who is the author of the following well-known quatrain:

'I do repent of wine and talk of wine
Of idols fair with chins like silver fine
A lip-repentance and a lustful heart,
O God, forgive this penitence of mine.'

But the most famous of all these was Firdausi, the author of the world-famed *Shahnama*, whose great epic has placed Mahmud among the immortals of history. Mahmud gave him only 60 thousand silver dirhams for completing the *Shahnama*, though he had promised 60 thousand *mishkals* of gold. At this the poet was so offended that he wrote a satire upon the king and left Ghazni for good.[6] Mahmud at last made amends

6 This is Browne's rendering of Firdausi's satire in his "Literary History of Persia":

Long years this Shahnama I toiled to complete,
That the king might award me some recompense meet,
But naught save a heart writhing with grief and despair
Did I get from those promises empty as air!
Had the sire of the king been prince of renown,
My forehead had surely been graced by a crown!

for his mistake, but when the belated 60 thousand gold coins arrived the poet's corpse was being carried in a bier to the grave.

Mahmud was stern and implacable in administering justice and was always ready to protect the persons and property of his subjects. There is no need to repeat the charge of avarice brought against the Sultan, as it cannot be refuted. Mahmud loved money passionately, but he also spent it lavishly. He promoted learning by establishing a university at Ghazni, a library, and a museum, adorned with the trophies of war, which he brought from conquered lands. It was through his liberality that beautiful edifices rose at his capital, making it one of the finest cities in Asia.

It is not difficult to determine Mahmud's place in history. To the Musalmans of his day, he was a Ghazi who tried to extirpate infidelity in heathen lands. He was an orthodox Sunni and took a keen interest in religion. To the Hindus, he is to this day a veritable Hun who destroyed their most sacred shrines and wounded their religious feelings. The impartial enquirer, however, must record a different verdict. To him, the Sultan is a born leader of men, a just and upright ruler, an intrepid and gifted soldier, a dispenser of justice, a patron of letters, and deserves to be ranked among the greatest personalities of the world.

Were his mother a lady of high pedigree,
In silver and gold had I stood to knee !
But, being by birth not a prince but a boor,
The praise of the noble he could not endure !

Firdausi was born at Tus in Khorasan about 950 A.D., and died in 1020 A.D. Mahmud had promised him a handsome reward, but he was deprived of it through the intrigues of Ayāz, one of Mahmud's favourites who entertained ill feelings towards the poet. (Elliot, IV, pp. 190—92.)

But his work did not endure. The mighty fabric that he had built up crumbled to pieces in the hands of his weak successors, as consolidation did not keep pace with conquest.

Mahmud failed to establish peace and order in the lands which he conquered by sheer dint of his valour. A Muslim mystic is reported to have said of him: "He is a stupid fellow. Without being able to manage what he already possesses he yet goes out to conquer new countries." Lawlessness prevailed in the empire, and brigand chiefs practised their nefarious trade with impunity. There was no well-organised system of police to put down crime and check the forces of disorder, Mahmud devised no laws or institutions for the benefit of his subjects. Local liberties were suppressed, and men of different nationalities were formed into an empire by force. No bond united them except their subordination or subservience to a common chief. The officers of Mahmud who were all imperialists followed their master, and showed greater interest in the expansion of the empire than in the establishment of an orderly and methodical administration. Such a political organisation as Mahmud's could not last long and as soon as his masterhand was stiffened in death, the elements of disorder asserted themselves with great vigour and undermined the imperial capacity for resistance. As Mr. Habib puts it when the Saljūqs knocked down the purposeless structure no one cared to weep over its fate.

Mahmud and Islam.

Mahmud came to India as a religious zealot accompanied by men who were prepared to sacrifice themselves in what they deemed a sacred cause. He fully exploited the religious sentiments of his followers, though he found no time to make conversions from among the native population. The following observations of a modern Muslim writer will be found interesting in this connection:

"No honest historian should seek to hide, and no Musalman acquainted with his faith will try to justify the wanton destruction of temples that followed in the wake of the Ghaznavide army. Contemporary as well as later historians do not attempt to veil the nefarious acts but relate them with pride. It is easy to twist one's conscience; and we know only too well how easy it is to find a religious justification for what people wish to do from worldly motives. Islam sanctioned neither the vandalism nor the plundering motives of the invader; no principle known to the *Shariat* justified the uncalled for attack on Hindu princes who had done Mahmud and his subjects no harm; the shameless destruction of places of worship is condemned in law of every creed. And yet Islam, though it was not an *inspiring motive*, could be utilised as an *a posteriori* justification of what had been done. It was not difficult to mistake the spoliation of non-Muslim populations for a service to Islam, and persons to whom the argument was addressed found it too much in consonance with the promptings of their own passions to examine it critically. So the precepts of the *Quran* were misinterpreted or ignored and the tolerant policy of the second Caliph was cast aside, in order that Mahmud and his myrmidons might be able to plunder Hindu temples with a clear and untroubled conscience."[7]

Al-Beruni.

Abu Rihān better known as Al-Beruni was born in 973 in the country of modern Khīvā and was captured by Mahmud, when he conquered it in 1017 A.D. He came to India in the train of Mahmud and stayed in the country for some time. He sympathetically studied the manners, customs, and institutions of the Hindus and has left us a vivid account of them which throws much light upon the conditions of those times. He writes that

[7] Habib, 'Sultan Mahmud of Ghaznin,' p. 79.

the country was parcelled out among petty chiefs, all independent of one another and often fighting amongst themselves. He mentions Kashmir, Sindh, Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal, and Kanauj as important kingdoms. About the social condition of the Hindus he writes that child marriage prevailed among them, widows were not permitted to marry again, and *Sati* was in vogue. Idol worship was common throughout the land, and vast riches were accumulated in temples which fired the lust of Muhammadan conquerors. Al-Beruni studied and appreciated the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. He writes that the vulgar people were polytheists, but the cultured classes believed God to be ' one, eternal, without beginning and end, acting by free will, almighty, all-wise, living, giving life, ruling and preserving.'

The administration of justice, though crude and primitive in many ways, was liberal and humane. Written complaints were filed, and cases were decided on the testimony of witnesses. The criminal law was mild, and Al-Beruni compares the mildness of the Hindus with the leniency of the Christians. Brahmans were exempt from capital punishment. Theft was punished according to the value of the property stolen, and mutilation of limbs was recognised as an appropriate penalty for certain offences. Taxation was mild. The state took only one-sixth of the produce of the soil, and Brahmans were exempt from taxation.

There is ample evidence in Al-Beruni's pages of India's degeneracy and decay. Politically she was disunited, and rival states fought against one another in complete disregard of national interests. Probably the word national had no meaning for them. Religion was encumbered by superstition, and society was held in the grip of a rigid caste system which rendered the unification of the various groups impossible. Indeed, in many respects India presented a parallel to mediæval Europe, and as a distinguished writer observes,

"Everything bore the appearance of disintegration and decay; and national life became extinct."

Masud, who proclaimed himself king in 1031 A.D., after his father's death by setting aside his younger brother, was a true son of his father, full of ambition, courage, and warlike zeal. The magnificence of the court of Ghazni was unequalled in that age, and Baihāki relates in his memoirs how the Sultan passed his days in pomp and splendour. Though drunken orgies were not unusual for even the great Mahmud, Masud carried them to excess, and himself became the leader of a notorious party of drunkards and debauchees.

Mahmud's successor.

But Masud had an able minister in Khwaja Ahmad Maimandi, whom he had liberated from prison and restored to office with great honours. The Khwaja set himself to the task of organising his office, which had become notorious for delay and lack of promptness under his predecessor. Under his care the administration soon began to display a new vigour and activity. While the Khwaja was thus honoured, his predecessor in office, Hasnāk, accused of Karmatian heresy, was put in chains, tried, and executed. After the execution, Hasnāk's head was served up in a dish at a feast held by Bu'Suhal to the complete horror of the guests. Such was the uncertainty of life and tenure of office under the demoralised Ghaznavides.

Execution of Hasnāk.

But Masud was no *roi faineant*. His contemporaries feared him both on the score of his physical prowess and his kingly dignity. He now turned his attention to the affairs in India, which had been left in charge of Ariyārak.

State of Affairs in India.

Secure in the possession of a vast territory, the ambitious Ghaznavide commander of Hind had begun to behave as an autocrat and cared little for the fiats of his sovereign. Masud, though a slave to drink and dissipation, knew how to assert

his dignity when his own authority was flouted or disregarded. Ariyārak was induced to proceed to Ghazni where he was cast into prison and probably poisoned. Ahmad Niyaltgin was appointed to the command of the Indian province, though he had to leave his son at Ghazni as a hostage under a nominal pretext. The new viceroy was hardly less ambitious than his predecessor, and he too, in Baihāki's words, "turned away from the path of rectitude and took a crooked course."

Treason of Ahmad Niyaltgin.

Ahmad Niyaltgin, on coming to India, found it difficult to get on with his colleague, Qazi Shiraz, and as he did not consult the latter in the discharge of his duties, a quarrel soon broke out between the two. But when the matter was referred to Ghazni, the Qazi received a strong rebuff, and was ordered to leave military affairs alone. Thereupon Niyaltgin undertook an expedition to Benares, tempted by the prospect of plundering the wealth of this ancient and venerated city of the Hindus. The expedition was a great success. The Qazi, however, could not bear the success of his rival, and sent spies to inform the Sultan that Niyaltgin gave himself out as the son of Sultan Mahmud, and aimed at independence. In every possible way, the enemies of Niyaltgin poisoned the Sultan's mind and impressed upon him the necessity of immediate intervention.

Official after official volunteered to go to Hindustan to restore order, but the choice at last fell upon Tilak, a Hindu of low birth, but of great ability and courage. As a mark of royal favour, he was granted a gold-embroidered robe, a jewelled necklace of gold, a canopy and an umbrella; kettle-drums were beaten, and ensigns with gilded tops were unfurled at his residence, in accordance with Hindu fashion, to proclaim his elevation to high official dignity. The philosophical Baihāki writes: "Wise men do not wonder at such facts, because nobody is born great—men become such."

When Tilak reached Lahore, his presence struck terror into the hearts of the followers of Ahmad Niyaltgin, and the rebellious governor fled for life. He was, however, defeated in a sharp engagement and a price of 500,000 dirhams was set upon his head by Tilak when the rebel eluded the grasp of his pursuers. The Jats who were well familiar with the desert and the wilds caught hold of Ahmad and cut off his head. Masud was delighted at the news of victory, and encouraged by this success, he determined to fulfil his old vow of capturing the fort of Hansi.[8] In vain did the veteran Khwaja urge upon him the impolicy of such a step, but the obstinate Sultan replied: "The vow is upon my neck, and accomplish it, I will, in my own person." The ministers bowed their heads in profound submission, and the Khwaja was invested with plenary authority at Ghazni.

The Sultan started from Ghazni in October 1037 A.D., and after a long march reached the town of Hansi. The invaders laid siege to the fortress hitherto deemed impregnable by the Hindus. Though the garrison heroically defended itself, the Muslims took the fortress by storm, and seized an enormous booty. Having placed the fortress in charge of a reliable official, the Sultan marched towards Sonpat, a place not far from Delhi. The Muslims easily captured it as the chief offered no resistance, and the victorious Sultan returned to Ghazni.

Capture of Hansi.

The expedition to India turned out a blunder. Taking advantage of the Sultan's absence, the Saljūq Turks harried the territories of Ghazni and sacked a portion of the capital. Masud marched against the invaders, but at Dandānkan near Merv he was overpowered by them on March 24, 1040 A.D.

[8] Hansi is a city with a ruined castle, eleven miles to the east of Hisar.

This crushing defeat at the hands of the Saljūqs compelled the Ghaznavides to withdraw towards India.

Masud's flight to India.

The vanquished Sultan fled towards Hindustan in spite of the advice of the aged minister who vainly pleaded with him to remain at Ghazni. When the royal party reached Marigalah,[9] the Turkish and Hindu slaves mutinied and placed upon the throne the Sultan's younger brother Muhammad. Masud was cast into prison and put to death in 1041 A.D.

Thus perished by the cruel hand of the assassin a king who, like his father, extended his patronage to men of letters, built mosques, and endowed schools and colleges in the various cities of his wide dominions. Thus does Baihāki observe in a characteristically fatalistic vein: "Man has no power to strive against fate."

The weak successors of Masud.

After Masud's death, his son Maudud ascended the throne, and defeated his uncle Muhammad in an engagement, thus avenging the death of his father. Maudud was succeeded by a series of weak rulers whose uneventful careers deserve little mention. The Saljūq pressure continued, and the Ghaznavide empire lost much of its territory. The Saljūqs eventually inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Ghaznavides, and the last independent ruler of Ghazni, Arslān, fled to Hindustan where he died in a state of misery in the year 1117 A.D. The Saljūqs thus established their influence at Ghazni, and dominated the titular Ghaznavide ruler, Bahrām, who owed his crown to them. Bahrām's reign would have ended gloriously, had it not been for the quarrels that arose between him and the Maliks of Ghor, a small mountain principality between Ghazni and Herat. These warlike Afghans had fought under the

9 A pass situated between Rawalpindi and Attock, a few miles east of Hasan Abdal.

banner of Mahmud, but when the sceptre of Ghazni passed into feeble hands, they treated it with scant respect. Matters came to a crisis, when a Suri prince was put to death by Bahrām's order. The brother of the deceased led an attack against Ghazni, but he was defeated and killed. Alauddin Husain, another brother, swore to wreak vengeance upon the house of Ghazni. He marched upon Ghazni at the head of a large army and won a splendid victory in 1150 A.D. Bahrām escaped to India but he returned to Ghazni again and recovered his lost power.

Bahrām died in 1152 A.D. and was followed by his son Khusrau Shah who was quite unfit to deal with the new situation. The Ghuzz Turkomans advanced upon Ghazni, whereupon Khusrau Shah escaped to India. The implacable Alauddin destroyed the finest buildings of the city and massacred the whole population. Khusrau Shah died in exile at Lahore in 1160 A.D.

The condition of the empire grew worse, and under Khusrau Malik, the new pleasure-loving ruler of Ghazni, the administration fell into a state of utter chaos. The power of Ghazni rapidly declined, and the house of Ghor rose into prominence. Alauddin's nephew Ghiyas-ud-din brought Ghazni under his control about the year 1173, and entrusted it with its dependencies including Kabul to the charge of his brother, Muiz-ud-din bin Sām, better known in history as Muhammad Ghori. Muiz-ud-din, who had an inborn aptitude for war and adventure, led repeated attacks against Hindustan, and compelled Khusrau Malik to make peace and surrender his son as security for the fulfilment of treaty obligations. Later, even Khusrau was taken prisoner by stratagems and false promises, and put to death in 1201 A.D. A similar catastrophe befell his son Bahrām Shah, and the line of Subuktagin came to an inglorious end. The sovereignty of Ghanzi now passed into the hands of the Ghori chiefs.

Fall of the Empire.

Thus after nearly two centuries, the empire of Ghazni disappeared from history. An empire which rested purely upon a military basis, could not last long without capable and warlike rulers. Mahmud had established no institutions which could hold his wide dominions together. The unwieldy empire had no principle of cohesion or unity, and speedily broke up after his death. The untold wealth obtained from Hindustan fostered luxury among his weak successors and rendered them unfit for the strenuous duties of war. Once the rotten character of the political system became known, disorders began on all sides. The profligate Ghaznavides were no match for their enemies who continued to seize large slices of Ghazni territory. As disorder increased in the Afghan regions, India also began to seethe with discontent. The multifarious troubles of the rulers of Ghazni made it difficult for them to deal properly with the Indian problem. But the chiefs of Ghor were men of a different stamp. They were better fitted to lead and command the unruly Turks, and knew how to employ their valour and zeal for purposes of self-aggrandizement.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONQUEST OF HINDUSTAN

Muhammad Ghori's attempt to seize the Muslim provinces of Hindustan was a remarkable success. His expedition to Uccha against the Bhatti Rajputs succeeded on account of treachery. He took Multan from the Karmatian heretics in 1174 A.D. Bhima Deva the Raja of Nehrwala, however, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the invaders who then captured Peshawar, and subdued the whole of Sindh down to the sea-coast. Having failed to capture the fortress of Lahore, Muhammad concluded a peace with Khusrau Malik, and returned to Ghazni. After his departure, Khusrau Malik laid siege to the fortress of Sialkot, assisted by the Khokhar tribes, but failed to capture it. When the news reached the Sultan, he again undertook an expedition against Lahore, and by a stratagem he captured Khusrau Malik in 1186 A.D., and put an end to the rule of the dynasty of Subuktagin. Lahore passed into the hands of the victorious chieftain.

Muhammad's Indian Campaign.

Muhammad was still far from being master of Hindustan. In the interior, lay Rajput kingdoms, wealthy and powerful, which were always ready to give battle to the foreigner who dared to invade their territory. The hillmen of Ghazni and Ghor had never encountered such dauntless fighters as the Rajputs. But the feudal organisation of the Rajput society was the principal cause of its weakness. The rivalries and feuds of the clans hampered unity of action, and the invidious caste distinction prevented the inferior classes among the Rajputs from being amalgamated with the proud noblesse. Only the well-born could hold fiefs, and this exclusive spirit tended to make the aristocracy hereditary and selfish. It was

impossible for these Rajput governments, based as they were upon a system of feuds, to last long, and, no wonder, if the first shock of the Muslim invasion shook Rajput India to its foundations.

Having organised his forces, Muhammad marched towards the frontier town of Sarhind which had a great strategic importance in the middle ages and captured it. The most powerful Rajput clans which exercised authority in Northern India were (1) the Gaharwars, afterwards known as the Rathors of Kanauj, (2) the Chohāns of Delhi and Ajmer, (3) the palas and Senas of Bihar and Bengal, (4) the Baghelas of Gujarat, and (5) the Chandelas of Bundelkhand. The most powerful of these were the rulers of Delhi and Kanauj, whose rivalry made it impossible for them to stem the tide of foregin invasion.

Prithviraja.

Prithviraja, who had succeeded to the kingdoms of Delhi and Ajmer, and had established a great reputation for chivalry and heroic exploits, marched against the Ghori chief, and encountered the Muslim host at Tarain,[1] a village fourteen miles from Thanesar, in 1191 A.D. Jayachandra, the Rathor Raja of Kanauj, was the only prince who kept aloof from this war; for Prithviraja had insulted him by carrying off his daughter by force. The Sultan followed the time-honoured tactics of the right, left and centre, and himself occupied a position in the middle of his army. The Rajputs charged both wings of the Muslim army with tremendous vigour and scattered it in all directions, while Govind Rai, the Raja's brother, inflicted a severe wound on the Sultan, who was luckily carried off the field of battle by a faithful Khilji warrior. This disaster caused a panic among the Muslims who immediately dispersed in all drections.

[1] In most histories it is written as Narain, which is incorrect. Lane-Poole too incorrectly writes Narain. (*Mediæval India,* p. 51.)

Never before, had they experienced such a terrible rout at the hands of the Hindus. When the Sultan reached Ghor, he publicly disgraced those officers who had fled from the field of battle.

The Defeat of Prithviraja.

With a large army, well-organised and accoutred, the Sultan marched from Ghazni towards Hindustan in 1192 A.D. to wreak vengeance upon the Hindu princes. The forces of the Sultan again encamped near Tarain. Alarmed for the safety of his kingdom, Prithviraja called upon his fellow Rajput princes to rally round his banner to fight the Turks. His appeal met with an enthusiastic response, and as many as 150 Rajput princes joined the colours of the Chohān warrior.

From morning till sunset the battle raged fiercely. While the enemy was tired, the Sultan, at the head of 12,000 horse, made a desperate charge and " carried death and destruction throughout the Hindu camp." The Rajput valour proved of no avail against these mounted archers, and a fearful slaughter ensued on all sides. The result of the battle was a foregone conclusion. The Hindus in spite of their numbers were defeated by the Muslims. The Muslim historians write that Prithviraja fled from the field, but he was captured near Sirsuti[2] and finally ' despatched to hell.'

The defeat of Prithviraja was an irreparable blow to Rajput power. The demoralisation caused by this defeat was great, and the Muslims easily captured Sirsuti, Samana, Kuhram and Hansi. The Sultan proceeded towards Ajmer, which was given up to plunder, and some thousands of the inhabitants were put to the sword. The city was made over to a natural son of Prithviraja on promise of punctual payment of tribute. Having left his faithful lieutenant Qutb-ud-din Aibek in charge of his

2 It was a city on the banks of the ancient Saraswati. In Akbar's time Sirsuti was one of the *mahals* of Sarkar Sambhal.

Indian possessions, the Sultan returned to Ghazni. Qutb-ud-din, in a short time, conquered Mirat (Meerut), Kol[3] and Delhi, the last of which he made the seat of his government.

Conquest of Kanauj.

Beyond Delhi, in the heart of the Doab, lay the principality of the Rathor clan with its capital at Kanauj renowned all over India as a nursery of warriors and statesmen. Its ruler Jayachandra, famous alike in legend and history, was reputed as one of the most powerful princes of his time. Jayachandra had, perhaps, hoped that, after the defeat of Prithviraja, he would become the paramount sovereign of all Hindustan, but his hopes were doomed to disappointment. In 1194 A.D. Sultan Muhammad marched from Ghazni against the Raja of Kanauj. No confederacy seems to have been organised by the latter to withstand the Muslim attack ; probably the defeat of Prithviraja had cooled the enthusiasm and crushed the spirit of the Rajputs who might have otherwise rallied round his banner. The Muslims inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Rajput army encamped in the plain between Chandwar and Etawah. Jayachandra received a mortal wound from an arrow and fell down on the earth. The Rathors, after this discomfiture, migrated to Rajputana, where they founded the principality of Jodhpur. The victorious Sultan now marched against Benares, where he destroyed temples and ordered mosques to be built in their places. He then returned to the fort of Kol, and laden with the spoils of war returned to Ghazni.

Other Conquests.

Qutb-ud-din's career in Hindustan was one of unbroken triumph. He marched against Ajmer, and restored its lawful ruler, a vassal of Ghazni, but appointed a Muslim governor to exercise control over him. From Ajmer, Aibek marched his forces against Bhima Deva,

3 Kol is a place near Aligarh. It was an old fortress which still exists.

the Raja of Nehrwala, whom he defeated. Gwalior, Biyana, and other places were compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ghazni.

Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji, an 'intrepid, bold, and sagacious' general, accomplished the conquest of Bihar with astonishing ease. He led an organised attack against the province, probably in 1197 A.D., at the head of a small detachment of 200 horsemen, and quickly captured the principal fortresses. The Buddhist monasteries, or *viharas* were demolished, and a large number of books were seized, and scattered by the invaders. It was the idolatry of latter-day Buddhism which stimulated the zeal of the Muslims, and the *débris* of Buddhist *viharas* and *stupas* that exist to this day, bear testimony to their iconoclastic zeal. The Muslim raid on Bihar gave a death-blow to Buddhism ; but it appears from an inscription of Vidyādhara dated Samvat 1276 (1219 A.D.) that it did not wholly disappear from Northern India.

Conquest of Bihar.

The conquest of Bihar was followed by that of Bengal. The Muslim chronicler, relying upon the account furnished by a certain soldier of Farghānā in the service of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar, writes that the intrepid general marched to the city of Nudiah at the head of a small party of 18 horsemen and that the aged Rai on hearing of his approach fled from a back-door of his palace and sought shelter at Vikrampur near Sonargaon which was a place resorted to by all discontented men at Gaur.[4] This is an exaggerated account of what actually happened. Muhammad destroyed the city of Nudiah and made Lakhnauti or Gaur his capital. The *khutbā* was read and coins were struck

Conquest of Bengal.

[4] The account of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* accepted *in toto* by Dr. Vincent Smith is undoubtedly exaggerated. The old view has been modified in the new and revised edition of his *Early History of India.*

in the name of Sultan Muiz-ud-din. A large portion of the enormous booty seized by Muhammad was sent to Qutb-ud-din.

Conquest of Kalanjar.

In 1202 A.D. Qutb-ud-din marched against Parmardi, the Chandela Prince of Bundelkhand. The latter found it impossible to resist effectively the Muslims, and the fort of Kalanjar fell into the hands of the victors. The forts of Kalpi and Badāon were subdued next, and in this way all the important places in Northern India were brought under the sway of Ghazni by Qutb-ud-din.

The tide turns.

The kings of Ghazni were not satisfied with their Indian possessions. They fondly looked towards the lands of the Oxus, which the kings of Ghazni, ever since the days of Mahmud, had tried in vain to annex. Muhammad followed the same practice and invaded Khwarizm at the head of a large army in the year 1204 A.D., but the troops of Ghori were pressed so hard by the Shah of Khwarizm and his allies that they were completely routed, and the Sultan with difficulty escaped with his life. As soon as the news of this disaster was circulated abroad, the forces of confusion began to work. A Ghazni officer hastily went to India and declared himself governor of Multan by producing a forged royal order, and he was accepted by the army. Ghazni shut its gates against the unlucky Sultan, and the turbulent Khokhars stirred up strife and harried the districts of the Punjab. The Sultan was, however, not unnerved by this gloomy prospect. He quickly recovered Multan and Ghazni, and then marched towards Hindustan to chastise the Khokhars, who suffered a crushing defeat near a ford of the Jhelam. Having obtained this victory, the Sultan returned to Lahore.

The Khokhar snake was scotched but not killed. Having failed in open engagement, the Khokhars had recourse to treachery. Some of their chiefs who burnt with rage to avenge the deaths of their kinsmen formed a conspiracy to take the

life of the Sultan. On his way from Lahore to Ghazni, the Sultan halted at Dhamyak in the Jhelam district where he was stabbed to death by a fanatic in March, 1246 A.D.

Estimate of Muhammad.

Not so fanatical as Mahmud, Muhammad was certainly more *political* than his predecessor. He clearly perceived the rotten political condition of India, and made up his mind to found a permanent dominion. Mahmud's love of wealth had blinded him to the gains of far-reaching importance, which the Indian conquest was bound to bring to the conqueror. Muhammad Ghori, from the outset, took a different course ; he tried to consolidate his conquests, and in this work he had the valued assistance and co-operation of his able lieutenant, Qutb-ud-din, who afterwards founded a dynasty of the kings of Delhi.

Mahmud never aimed at permanent conquest ; he had come sweeping like a whirlwind and had returned to his native land after the acquisition of vast booty. Wealth and the extirpation of idolatry were the objects of his raids ; but Muhammad was a real conqueror. He conquered the country and aimed at permanent settlement. A complete conquest of India was impossible as long as warrior-blood throbbed within the veins of the Rajput race. But for the first time the Muslims had brought extensive territory under their direct sway. Qutb-ud-din was appointed viceroy of Hindustan, and charged with the duty of extending further the dominion of Islam—a fact which clearly shows the object which Muhammad had in mind. It is true, he turned his eyes westwards for territorial expansion, but it would be wrong to blame Muhammad for following a traditional policy. His work in India was more solid. The Muslim power, which he founded in India, increased as time passed, and from humble beginnings the kingdom of Delhi gradually developed into one of the greatest empires of the east. It was no mean contribution to the greatness of Islam.

CHAPTER V

THE SLAVE DYNASTY[1]

(1206—90 A.D.)

Qutb-ud-din's elevation to the throne.

Muhammad died without a male heir. Minhaj-us-Siraj writes that on one occasion when a favourite courtier spoke to the Sultan about the default of male heirs, he replied with absolute indifference: "Other monarchs may have one son, or two sons: I have so many thousand sons, namely, my Turki slaves, who will be the heirs of my dominions, and who, after me, will take care to preserve my name in the *khutbā* throughout those territories." After the death of his master, Qutb-ud-din Aibek naturally came to the forefront. He became the ruler of Hindustan and founded a dynasty of kings, which is called after his name. Originally Aibek was a slave. He was purchased by the Qazi of Nishapur, through whose favour he acquired a reputation for courage and manly bearing. After the Qazi's death he passed into the hands of Sultan Muiz-ud-din. Though ugly in external appearance, Aibek was endowed with "laudable qualities and admirable impressions;" and by sheer dint of merit he rose gradually to the position of *Amir Ākhur* (master of the stables). During the Sultan's expeditions to Hindustan, Aibek loyally served him, and as a reward for his services, he was left in charge of the Indian possessions. As viceroy of Hindustan, he secured and extended the conquests made by his master. He strengthened himself by matrimonial connections; he married the daughter of Taj-ud-din Eldoz, and

[1] This dynasty has been miscalled the Slave dynasty. The slaves who occupied the throne had been originally slaves but they were manumitted by their masters and raised to the rank of freemen.

gave his sister in marriage to Qubaicha and his daughter to Īltutmish, one of his own slaves.

Aibek captured Hansi, Meerut, Delhi, Ranthambhor and Kol, and conquered the country as far as Benares. In 1197 A.D. Qutb-ud-din led his forces against Nehrwala. The chief was defeated in a hotly contested engagement, and the whole country was ravaged by the Muslims. For six years, *i.e.*, from 1196 to 1202 A.D. there was cessation of warfare in India, but in 1202 A.D. Aibek marched against the fort of Kalanjar, captured it and seized enormous booty. Mahoba was occupied next. Bengal and Bihar had already been subjugated by Muhammad Khilji, son of Bakhtiyar, who had acknowledged the suzerainty of Qutb-ud-din. All Hindustan, from Delhi to Kalanjar and Gujarat, and from Lakhnauti to Lahore, was brought under the sway of the Muslims, though the distant lands comprised in the empire of Delhi were not thoroughly subdued.

His Career of Conquest.

Qutb-ud-din was a high-spirited and open-handed monarch. He administered the country well, dispensed even-handed justice to the people, and exerted himself to promote the peace and prosperity of the realm. The roads were freed from robbers, and the Hindus were treated with kindness, though the Sultan, like 'a mighty fighter in the way of God,' captured thousands as slaves during his wars. His generosity is praised by all writers who style him as *lakhbakhsha* or giver of lakhs.

Qutb-ud-din as Ruler.

Aibek was a powerful and capable ruler who always maintained a high character. Brave and energetic, sagacious and just, according to Muslim ideas, Aibek was devoted to the faith, and as the founder of a large kingdom on foreign soil among races whose martial prowess was well-known, he ranks among the great pioneers of Muslim conquest in India. He gave proof of his religious zeal by building two mosques, one at Delhi and another at Ajmer. He died in 1210 A.D. from a fall from his



Qutbi Mosque, Delhi

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horse, while he was playing *chaugan*,[2] leaving a large kingdom to his successor.

Aram succeeded his father, but after a brief reign of one year, Īltutmish, who was then governor of Badāon, defeated and dethroned him. At the time of Aram's death Hindustan was parcelled out into four principalities—Sindh was held by Qubaicha ; Delhi and its contiguous country were in the possession of Īltutmish; Lakhnauti was held by the Khilji Maliks; Lahore was held alternately by Qubaicha and Eldoz who was then supreme at Ghazni.

Confusion after Aibek's death.

Īltutmish who ascended the throne in 1210 A.D. is the greatest of the slave kings. He was the slave of a slave,[3] who rose to eminence by sheer dint of merit, and it was solely by virtue of his fitness that he superseded the hereditary claimants to the throne. But he did not find the throne of Delhi a bed of roses. He had to face a critical situation, as rivals like Eldoz and Qubaicha aspired to universal dominion, while some of the Muizzi and Qutbi amirs watched with sullen resentment the usurpation by a slave of the throne which lawfully belonged to the line of Aibek. Besides, there were numerous Hindu princes and chieftains whose recognition of the sovereignty of the Muslims was only nominal. But Īltutmish was not the man to fail or falter in the face of difficulties, and in grim earnestness he set himself to the task of dealing with the situation in a bold and decisive manner.

Iltutmish's accession to the throne.

[2] *Chaugan* was something like modern polo. In the early middle ages it was a favourite game in Persia and India.

[3] Īltutmish was purchased by a certain merchant Jamal-ud-din who brought him to Ghazni. From there he was taken to Delhi and was sold to Qutb-ud-din along with another slave named Bak.

Having overpowered all the refractory amirs, he brought the whole of the principality of Delhi under his control. But his safety depended upon the suppression of his rivals, and he at once turned his attention towards them.

Suppression of rivals.

Eldoz who had been purchased by Sultan Muhammad, when he was young in years, won the confidence of the Sultan by his ability and courage, and after the death of his master, became ruler of Ghazni. But he was expelled by Qutb-ud-din who made himself master of the country. The people of Ghazni, however, soon got disgusted with the drunken orgies of Qutb-ud-din, and invited Eldoz to assume charge of the kingdom. Eldoz was a spirited soldier ; he ultimately defeated Qubaicha, governor of Sindh, and established himself in the Punjab. Iltutmish, who could not afford to see a formidable rival established so near the northern frontier, marched against him and inflicted a crushing defeat upon him in 1215 A.D. in the vicinity of Tarain. Eldoz was taken prisoner and put to death. The defeat of Eldoz was followed by an attack upon Qubaicha, who, after an unsuccessful engagement, tendered his submission in 1217 A.D. But it was not till 1227 A.D. that he was finally subdued.

This danger was nothing in comparison with the storm which burst upon India in 1221 A.D. The Mongols[4] under Chingiz Khan came down from their mountain steppes in Central Asia and ravaged the countries that came in their way. The Mongol was a ferocious and blood-thirsty savage, and in fact the word Mongol itself is derived from the word Mong, meaning brave, daring, bold.

The Invasion of Chingiz Khan.

4 The forms Moghul, Mughal and Mongol are used for one and the same word. When the Mongols separated themselves from their ancestral regions and came to close quarters with the Musalman inhabitants of the western states of Central Asia, their neighbours mispronounced the name of their original nation and called them Moghul or Mughal.

Chingiz, who was a typical Mongol warrior, was born in 1155 A.D. at Dilum Boldak near the river Oman. His original name was Temujin. His father died when he was only 13 years of age. As a result of this calamity, the young lad had to struggle for years against adversity, and it was only in 1203 A.D. that he was proclaimed Khan. With lightning speed he overran China, plundered and devastated the Muhammadan countries of Western Asia. Balkh, Bokhara, Samarqand, and many other famous and beautiful cities were ruined by his predatory raids. When Chingiz attacked Jalal-ud-din, the last Shah of Khwarizm, he fled towards Hindustan, whither he was pursued by the invaders. He encamped on the Indus and prepared to give battle to the Mongols. He sent an envoy to Īltutmish requesting him to grant a place for residence in Delhi for some time, but the latter excused himself on the ground that the climate of Delhi would not suit him, and had the envoy murdered. Jalal-ud-din was eventually defeated by the Mongols, and with difficulty succeeded in effecting his escape with only a handful of followers. Having allied himself with the Khokhars, he fell upon Nāsir-ud-din Qubaicha, whom he drove into the fortress of Multan. After a short time, however, he went to Persia, where he learnt that the army in Iraq was ready to help him, but he was murdered by a fanatic whose brother he had previously slain. The Mongols found the heat of India intolerable and went back to the lands to the west of the Indus, which had a great attraction for them. Thus was India saved from a great calamity, and Īltutmish now felt himself strong enough to crush his native enemies.

Conquests.

The Khilji Maliks had withdrawn their allegiance after the death of Qutb-ud-din. Some of them, like Ali Mardan and Ghiyas-ud-din Khilji, had also struck their own coins and caused their names to be read in the *khutbā* as independent rulers. In 1225 A.D. Īltutmish sent an army against Ghiyas who concluded a treaty and paid a

large tribute. The *khutbā* was read, and coins were struck in his name. When the Sultan's forces withdrew, Ghiyas expelled the governor of Bihar and seized the province. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah, who held the fief of Oudh, marched against him. Ghiyas was defeated and slain, and the Khilji amirs were made captives. The whole of Lakhnauti passed into the hands of the prince. Ranthambhor fell in 1226 A.D. ; and Mandor in the Sewalik hills followed suit a year later.

The fall of Qubaicha.

Qubaicha, another slave of Sultan Muiz-ud-din, was a man of intellect and sound judgment, and through his master's favour had acquired considerable influence. He was appointed governor of Uccha where he managed the affairs so well that in a short time he made himself master of the whole country of Sindh which now extended as far as Sarhind, Kuhram, and Sirsuti. His successes aroused the jealousy of his rival chief at Ghazni, and Lahore soon became a bone of contention between him and Eldoz. When the Khalj and Khwarizm forces were defeated by Qubaicha, they found protection with Īltutmish who espoused their cause. He started from Delhi by way of Sarhind towards Uccha at the head of a large army. Hearing of the approach of the Sultan, Qubaicha entrenched himself in the fortress of Bhakkar. The royal army invested the fortress of Uccha and captured it after a protracted siege of two months and twenty-seven days in 1227 A.D. The capitulation of Uccha so disheartened Qubaicha that he embarked in a boat in order to save his life, but he was drowned in the Indus.

Investiture by the Khalifa.

In 1228 A.D. Īltutmish received a patent of investiture from the Khalifa of Baghdad, the highest pontiff of Islam, a recognition which enormously increased the prestige of the Indo-Muhammadan power in India. It legitimised the Sultan's authority and silenced those who challenged his claim to the throne on the score of his birth, and gave to his authority the sanction of

a name, honoured and cherished by the entire Muslim world. The name of the Khalifa was inscribed on the coins issued from the royal mints, and the Sultan was described as "Aid of the Commander of the Faithful Nāsir Amir-ul-M'umnin." The currency was remodelled, and Īltutmish was the first to introduce a purely Arabic coinage; and the silver *tanka* weighing 175 grains became the standard coin.

The Conquest of Bengal and Gwalior.

When Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud Shah died in Bengal, the Khilji Maliks at Lakhnauti broke out into rebellion. The Sultan marched against the rebels at the head of a large army and defeated them. The government of Lakhnauti was conferred upon Malik Alauddin Jāni, and order was restored in the province. In 1231 A.D. the Sultan undertook an expedition to Gwalior which had thrown off the yoke of Delhi during the brief reign of Aram Shah. Mangala Deva, the ruler of the place, offered a desperate resistance, and it was after a prolonged fight, which continued off and on for eleven months, that the fortress was captured in 1232 A.D. Mangala Deva effected his escape but a large number of his followers were captured and slain.

The close of a successful career.

A year later, the Sultan marched against Malwa and captured the fort of Bhilsa, from which place he proceeded to Ujjain which easily fell into his hands. The temple of Mahakāli, one of the most venerated shrines in that city, was demolished, and the idols were carried off to Delhi. The Sultan had to abandon the projected expedition against Banian on account of his ill-health, which ultimately grew worse, and he expired in his palace in 1235 A.D.

Estimate of Īltutmish.

Īltutmish is undoubtedly the real founder of the Slave dynasty. It was he who consolidated the conquests that had been made by his master Qutb-ud-din. He brought under his sway the whole of Hindustan except a few outlying provinces and

displayed extraordinary vigour and intrepidity in dealing with his foes. Though he was always busy in military campaigns, he extended his patronage to the pious and the learned. He was deeply religious, and his observance of the faith led the Mulahidas to form a conspiracy to take his life, but luckily it proved abortive. The Sultan was a great builder, and the Qutb Minar famous for its massive grandeur and beauty of design still stands as a worthy memorial of his greatness. As long as he lived, he behaved like a great monarch, and the contemporary chronicler Minhāj-us-Sirāj extols his virtues in these words: "never was a sovereign of such exemplary faith, of such kindness and reverence towards recluses, devotees, divines and doctors of religion and law, from the mother of creation ever enwrapped in swaddling bands of dominion."

The weak successors of Īltutmish.

Īltutmish, who was well aware of the incapacity of his sons, had nominated his daughter Reziya as his heir. But the nobles, who had a prejudice against the succession of a female, placed upon the throne prince Rukn-ud-din, a son of Īltutmish, a notorious debauchee, addicted to the most degrading sensual enjoyments. While the young prince was immersed in pleasures, the affairs of state were managed by his mother Shah Turkān, an ambitious lady, who had an inordinate love of power. But when mother and son brought about the cruel murder of Qutb-ud-din, another prince of the blood royal, the maliks and amirs assumed an attitude of hostility towards them. The governors of Oudh, Badāon, Hansi, Multan, and Lahore became openly hostile, while the crisis was precipitated by an attempt of the Queen-mother to take the life of Sultan Reziya, the eldest daughter and heiress-designate of Īltutmish. The conspiracy was nipped in the bud, and Shah Turkān was taken prisoner by the infuriated mob. Rukn-ud-din was also seized, and thrown into prison where he died in 1236 A.D. The nobles now rallied round Reziya and saluted her as their sovereign.

When Reziya was formally nominated as heir-apparent by her father, the ministers of the Sultan felt scandalised at the elevation of a woman to royal dignity, and urged upon him the imprudence of such a measure, but he replied, "My sons are engrossed in the pleasures of youth, and none of them possesses the capacity to manage the affairs of the country. After my death it will be seen that not one of them will be found to be more worthy of the heir-apparentship than my daughter." The advocates of male succession were thus silenced, and Reziya was acknowledged heir to the throne.

Sultan Reziya's accession to the throne.

Muhammad Junaidi, Wazir of the kingdom, did not acknowledge her right to the throne, and the provincial governors too offered opposition. It was a critical situation for Reziya, but Nasrat-ud-din Tayarsi, the feudatory of Oudh, who owed his position to her, came to her rescue. By her courage and diplomacy, the queen soon put down the rebellious maliks, and restored order throughout the kingdom. In the words of the chronicler, "from Lakhnauti to Debal and Damrilah all the maliks and amirs tendered obedience and submission."

She secures her hold.

Reziya was a talented woman. The contemporary chronicler describes her as a "great sovereign and sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a disposer of justice, the cherisher of her subjects, and of warlike talent, and was endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for a king ; but, as she did not attain the destiny in her creation, of being computed among men, of what advantage were all these excellent qualifications to her." She tried her best to play the King. She cast off female garments, abandoned the seclusion of the zenana, donned the head-dress of a man, and transacted business in open darbar. She took an active part in campaigns against the Hindus and the rebellious Muslim

Her policy causes discontent.

chiefs, and herself led an expedition against the governor of Lahore, who was compelled to acknowledge her authority. But her sex proved her worst disqualification. As Elphinstone remarks, her talents and virtues were insufficient to protect her from a single weakness. It was shown in extraordinary marks of favour to her master of the horse, who, to make her partiality more degrading, was an Abyssinian slave, Jamal-ud-din Yaqūt. The freeborn Khans, whom the corps of the Turkish mamluks known as "the forty" had superseded in power, resented the preference which the queen showed to the Abyssinian. The feeling against her was further accentuated by her public appearance which shocked the orthodox Muslims.

Altunia's revolt.

The first to raise the standard of revolt was Altunia, the rebel governor of Sarhind. Reziya forthwith started from the capital to put down the revolt. When she reached Tabarhindah, the Turkish amirs slew her favourite Yaqūt and imprisoned her in the fort. But the artful queen proved too clever for her captors. She cast her spell on Altunia who contracted a marriage with her, and marched towards Delhi to recover the kingdom. Muiz-ud-din Bahram Shah, brother of Reziya, who had been proclaimed king by the amirs, led an army against the queen and her consort, and defeated them. The partisans of Altunia deserted him, and together with his spouse he fell into the hands of the Hindus who put them to death in 1240 A.D. Reziya's reign lasted for three and a half years.

The confusion after Reziya's death.

Bahram Shah, brother of Reziya, who succeeded her, was a prince "fearless, full of courage and sanguinary." His reign was full of murder, treachery, and intrigue ; and disaffection became widespread when he adopted drastic measures to put down conspiracies. The Mongols made their appearance in Hindustan in 1241 A.D. and captured Lahore. Shortly afterwards the Sultan was assassinated, and was

succeeded by Alauddin Masud Shah, a grandson of Iltutmish. In 1245 A.D., the Mongols appeared again in India, but they were repelled with heavy losses. During the latter part of his reign, the Sultan began to behave like a tyrant and became inordinately fond of pleasure. Disaffection grew apace ; and the amirs and maliks invited Nāsir-ud-din, another son of Īltutmish, to take charge of the kingdom. Masud was thrown into prison in May 1246 A.D., where he died shortly afterwards.

Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud.

The throne of Delhi now fell to the lot of Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud Shah, younger son of Īltutmish, in 1246 A.D. He was a pious, God-fearing and kind-hearted ruler who patronised the learned and sympathised with the poor and the distressed. He led the retired and obscure life of a darvesh, denied to himself the pleasures of royalty, and earned his living by copying verses from the Quran. By character and temperament he was unfitted to rule the kingdom of Delhi at a time, when internal factions and Hindu revolts conspired to weaken the monarchy, and the Mongols hammered upon the gates of India. But fortunately the Sultan had an able minister in Balban who guided the domestic as well as the foreign policy of the state throughout his master's reign.

Balban's early career.

Balban was a Turk of the tribe of Ilbari, and his father was a Khan of 10,000 families. He was, in his youth, captured by the Mongols, who conveyed him to Baghdad, where he was purchased by Khwaja Jamal-ud-din of Basra. The latter took him to Delhi where he was purchased by Īltutmish. Balban was appointed *Khasah-bardar* (personal attendant) to the Sultan, and was enrolled in the famous corps of forty slaves. Under Reziya he was promoted to the rank of *Amir-i-Shikar* (Lord of the Hunt). Bahram entrusted to him the fief of Rewari, to which was afterwards added the district of Hansi.

When the Mongols under their leader Mangu, invaded Sindh and laid siege to the fortress of Uccha in 1245 A.D., Balban organised a large army to repel their attack. It was his military vigour and intrepidity which inflicted a crushing defeat on the Mongols, and won such brilliant success for the arms of Islam. When Nāsir-ud-din ascended the throne in 1246 A.D., he was appointed principal minister of the state.

Balban crossed the Ravi in 1246, ravaged the Jūd and Jhelam hills, and suppressed the Khokhars and other contumacious tribes. He undertook several expeditions to the Doab to chastise the refractory Hindu Rajas. The Rana of Malaki, the country between Kalanjar and Kara, was subdued, and Mewat and Ranthambhor were ravaged. The rebellious Muslim governors were suppressed, and Gwalior, Chanderi, Malwa and Narwar were subdued.

Six months later, when the Sultan marched towards Uccha and Multan, Imād-ud-din Rihān, who was jealous of Balban's influence, excited the maliks and poisoned the ears of the Sultan against him. The great minister was consequently banished from the court in 1253, and Imād-ud-din was installed as *Vakil-i-dar*[5] at the capital.

Imād-ud-din was a renegade Hindu, and his tutelage now galled the pride of the maliks and nobles of the court, who were all "Turks of pure lineage and Tajziks of noble birth," and looked upon it as a disgrace to serve under him. The administration grew lax, and from all sides requests poured in upon the Sultan to dismiss the vile upstart. The powerful maliks eventually persuaded the Sultan to order the dismissal of Rihān. He was ordered off to the fief of Badāon, and Balban returned to the capital in triumph in February 1254 A.D.

[5] The principal duty of the *Vakil-i-dar* was to hold the keys of the gate of the king's palace. The office existed among the Mughals also and was no doubt considered important by them.

When Qutlugh Khan, governor of Oudh, revolted in 1255, Balban marched against him and obliged him to withdraw. The former was assisted by all the disaffected maliks and Hindus, and was joined by Iz-ud-din Balban Kashlu Khan, governor of Sindh, who, also, following the evil example of Qutlugh Khan, revolted. The two maliks effected a junction of their armies near Samana and marched towards the capital, but were unable to put into execution their nefarious project. Towards the close of the year 1257 the Mongols again invaded Sindh, but when the royal forces marched against them, they retreated.

Suppression of Rebellions.

The last expedition was against the hilly country of Mewat in the year 1259, where the rebels under their leader Malka, a Hindu, plundered and destroyed villages, and harassed the peasantry in the districts of Hariana, Sewalik and Biyana. Ulugh Khan crushed the rebels and cleared the whole country of these pests.

The last expedition.

For full two decades Balban preserved the state from many a danger, and put down with an iron hand the elements of disorder and strife. The frontier posts were strongly garrisoned ; a large and efficient army was constructed, and the Mongols were successfully repelled. The rebellions of the refractory Hindus were effectively suppressed, and the disaffected amirs and maliks too were curbed. But for Balban's vigour and energy, the kingdom of Delhi would have hardly survived the shocks of internal revolts and external invasions.

Balban's achievement.

After Nāsir-ud-din's death in 1266, the mantle of sovereignty devolved upon Balban. His first task was to reorganise the administration, and to take effective steps to prevent the recurring Mongol raids. Barani writes : " Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory

Balban becomes king.

and splendour of states, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition." By drastic punishments and relentless measures, the new Sultan, who was an adept in the art of government, suppressed the elements of disorder and taught people obedience and submissiveness.

Establishes order.

The first need of Balban was a large and efficient army. The cavalry and infantry, both old and new, were placed under maliks of experience, who had given proof of their courage and loyalty in many battles. With the help of this army, he established order in the lands of the Doab and the environs of Delhi. The turbulence of the Mewatis had become a serious menace to the throne of Delhi. They carried their predatory raids in the vicinity of the capital, and at night "they used to come prowling into the city, giving all kinds of trouble, depriving the people of their rest." So great was their audacity that the western gate of the capital had to be closed at the time of afternoon prayer, and even the garb of a mendicant was no protection against their high-handedness. The Sultan cleared the jungles and inflicted a crushing defeat upon them. To provide for the security of the capital, he built outposts which were strongly garrisoned by Afghans, to whom grants of land were made for maintenance. The noblemen and officers, who were left in charge of the country, thoroughly subjugated it, and put to the sword thousands of these miscreants. In the heart of the Doab the greatest insecurity prevailed ; and Kampil, Patiali, and Bhojpur were the strongholds of robbers, who infested the roads and rendered impossible the transport of merchandise from one place to another. The Sultan proceeded in person to quell these disorders, and posted strong Afghan garrisons to put down brigandage and lawlessness. "The den of the robbers was thus converted into a guard-house, and Musalmans and guardians of the way took the place of highway

robbers," so that sixty years afterwards Barani was able to record with satisfaction that the roads were freed from robbers and the lives of the wayfarers rendered secure.

Having suppressed the outlaws, the Sultan led an expedition to the mountains of Jūd and chastised the hill tribes. Two years later he proceeded against the fort which had been destroyed by the Mongols. The whole country was laid waste and order was restored. This brief campaign once again revealed to the Sultan the unfitness of the old Shamsī veterans, who had enjoyed liberal grants of land for the last thirty or forty years. It appeared that about 2,000 horsemen of the army of Shams-ud-din held villages in the Doab in lieu of salary. Many of the grantees were old and infirm, and many had died, and their sons had taken possession of their lands and caused their names to be entered in the records of the *Ariz* (muster-master). These holders of service lands called themselves proprietors and professed to have received the lands in free gift from Sultan Shams-ud-din. Some of them performed their military duties in a leisurely manner, others stayed at home making excuses, and bribed the Deputy Muster-master and his officials to condone their neglect of duty. The Sultan at once issued an order for holding an enquiry into the condition of these service tenures, and a list of all grantees was prepared. This order caused a feeling of dismay among the members of the military oligarchy, which had held so far a monopoly of all favour and privilege in the state. Some of these old Khans approached Fakhr-ud-din, the Kotwal of Delhi, who was supposed to have influence with the Sultan, and requested him to intercede in their behalf. The Kotwal eloquently pleaded the cause of these aged veterans, and the Sultan was moved with compassion to cancel the resumption of their estates. Though the original order was revoked, the Khans lost much of their former influence and tamely submitted to Balban's dictation.

Balban organised the internal administration on a most efficient basis. It was half civil, half military. He was himself the fountain of all authority, and enforced his commands with the greatest rigour. Even his own sons who held important provinces were not allowed much initiative, and had to refer to the Sultan all complicated matters on which he passed final orders, which were to be strictly enforced. In administering justice he never showed partiality even towards his own kith and kin, and when any of his relations or associates committed an act of injustice, he never failed to grant redress to the aggrieved party. So great was the dread of the Sultan's inexorable justice that no one dared to ill-treat his servants and slaves. When Malik Barbak, one of the courtiers, who held a jāgīr of 4,000 horse and the fief of Badāon, caused one of his servants to be scourged to death, his widow complained to the Sultan. He ordered the Malik to be flogged similarly in the presence of the complainant, and publicly executed the spies who had failed to report his misconduct. A well-established system of espionage is inseparable from despotism, and Balban with a view to make the administration of justice more efficient appointed spies in his fiefs, who reported to him all acts of injustice. To make these reports accurate and honest, he greatly restricted the field of individual observation, and when the report was made, he showed no indulgence on the score of rank or birth. Even Bughra Khan's movements were watched by the spies, and it is said that the Sultan took great pains to keep himself informed of his activities. These spies no doubt checked crime and protected innocent persons against the high-handedness of those in power, but their presence must have demoralised the community and led to the suppression of even the most legitimate and harmless amenities of social life.

Internal government.

But the one all-absorbing pre-occupation of the Sultan was

the fear of the recurring Mongol invasions. Although he possessed a large and disciplined army, he never left Delhi, and devised measures to safeguard his dominions against the raids of these nomad hordes. The Mongols had seized Lahore and every year harried the lands of Sindh and the Punjab. The Sultan never moved from the capital, and kept a vigilant watch upon the vulnerable parts of the empire. The provinces of Multan and Samana, which were most exposed to attack, being near to the northern frontier, were entrusted to his own sons, Muhammad and Bughra Khan, who maintained large and well-trained armies to fight against the Mongols. But this constant fear greatly influenced the foreign policy of Balban. He never attempted the conquest of any distant country ; his whole attention was concentrated upon measures to guard himself and his kingdom against the Mongols. Even the administrative organisation was carried out with a view to strengthen the government to cope with these calamitous raids. From Amir Khusrau's[6] description of these nomad savages, which is somewhat tinged by the poet's own feelings, for he had on one occasion fallen into their hands, we can form some idea of the horrors which their recurring raids implied. He writes: "There were more than a thousand Tartar infidels and warriors of other tribes, riding on camels, great commanders in battle, all with steel-like bodies clothed in cotton ; with faces like fire, with caps of sheepskin, with heads shorn. Their eyes were so

The Mongols.

6 Abul Hasan, better known by his *nom de plume* of Amir Khusrau by far the greatest Muslim poet of India, was born at Patiali in 651 A.H. (1253 A.D.), and died at Delhi in 725 A.H. (1324-25 A.D.) While yet a boy, he became a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia. He entered the service of Balban as an attendant on his son Prince Muhammad, who was fond of the society of the learned. Gradually he rose into prominence and was elevated to the position of poet-laureate. He died of grief at the death of his favourite saint Nizam-ud-din Aulia. He has written numerous works, brief notices of which are given in Elliot, III, pp. 67—92, 523—67.

narrow and piercing that they might have bored a hole in a brazen vessel . . . . Their faces were set on their bodies as if they had no neck. Their cheeks resembled soft leathern bottles, full of wrinkles and knots. Their noses extended from cheek to cheek, and their mouths from cheek-bone to cheek-bone . . . . Their moustaches were of extravagant length. They had but scanty beards about their chins . . . . They looked like so many white demons, and the people fled from them everywhere in affright."[7] Hardy and heartless invaders such as these, coming from the cooler regions beyond the Hindukush, could not be trifled with, and Balban was led by the instinct of sheer self-preservation to ignore all other things and keep his army ever on the war-path to repel their oft-repeated incursions.

Tughril's Rebellion, 1279 A.D.

Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal,[8] who had been appointed by Balban, was led astray by his evil counsellors. They told him that the Sultan was old and his two sons were occupied in dealing with the Mongol attacks, and the leaderless nobles possessed neither men nor munitions to march to Lakhnauti to frustrate his attempt at independence. Tughril readily listened to this false and mischievous advice and "allowed the egg of ambition to be hatched in his head." He attacked Jajnagar, carried off a large booty consisting of valuable goods and elephants, and kept it all for himself. This act of disloyalty was consummated by a formal declaration of independence, when he assumed the royal title of Sultan Mughis-ud-din, struck coins, and caused the *khutbā* to be read in his own name. The

[7] For further account of these savages, see Elliot, III, Appendix, pp. 528-29.

[8] Tughril was originally a Turkish slave who had been purchased by Balban. Being a brave and warlike man, he subdued the Rajas of the neighbouring countries and compelled them to pay tribute.

possession of vast wealth enabled him to bestow large gifts upon his associates. As Barani writes, money closed the eyes of the clear-sighted, and greed of gold kept the more politic in retirement. Sedition became so rife that the soldiers as well as citizens ceased to fear the sovereign power, and gave their adhesion to the rebellious governor.

The Sultan was much disturbed by the news of this revolt. A royal army crossed the Sarjū and marched towards Lakhnauti, but when it reached Bengal, it was opposed and defeated by Tughril, who had drawn to his banner by his liberality numerous adherents from the country districts. The troops of Delhi fled, and many of them deserted their colours and went over to the enemy.

Another expedition met with a like fate. Emboldened by his success, Tughril marched out of Lakhnauti, fell upon the army of Delhi, and completely defeated it. The news of this defeat overwhelmed the Sultan with shame and anger, and he swore vengeance upon the rebels. Having entrusted the affairs of Delhi to Malik Fakhr-ud-din, he proceeded towards Samana and Sunnam, and asked his son Bughra Khan to accompany him to Bengal. Prince Muhammad was asked to take care of the province in his charge, and to keep a vigilant eye upon the Mongols. At the head of a large army, the Sultan started for Lakhnauti in spite of the rains. He ordered a general levy in Oudh, and enrolled about two lākhs of men in his army. A large flotilla of boats was constructed, and the royal troops crossed the Sarjū, but their passage in the marshy land of Bengal was delayed by the rains. The royal army wended its way through mud and water to the capital of Bengal only to find that the rebel, deeming himself unable to withstand the Sultan, had fled towards the wilds of Jajnagar, taking with him treasure, elephants and a picked body of fighting men. He was pursued by the royal troops, and the Sultan publicly declared that he would never abandon the pursuit, cost him

what time and trouble it might. He gave the soldiers some idea of his mighty resolve, when he told them that they were playing for half the kingdom of Delhi, and, if Tughril took to the water, he would pursue him and would never return to Delhi, or even mention it, until the blood of the rebel and his followers had been poured out. Many of them despaired of ever returning to their homes and made their wills. A large party of horsemen was sent in search of Tughril, but no trace of him was to be found. After a diligent search the camp of Tughril was discovered, and the royal horsemen rudely interrupted the joyous life led by him and his men in these bucolic surroundings. His army fled from the field panic-stricken, and he himself, mounted a saddleless horse and tried to gallop to a stream which ran hard by. He was pursued by the royalists, and an arrow which pierced him on the side at once brought him down. His head was severed from the body, which was flung into the river, and his women, children, and dependents were all captured by the victors. The Sultan was pleased to hear of the success of this expedition, and suitably rewarded the men who had risked their lives in his service.

Balban returned to Lakhnauti where gibbets were erected on both sides in the bazar, and the relatives and accomplices of Tughril were hanged mercilessly. These terrible punishments went on for two or three days, and it is said that even the *Qazis* and *Muftis* obtained their pardon with great difficulty. When the work of slaughter was over, Balban made arrangements for the restoration of order in the country. He entrusted the province to his son Bughra Khan whom he asked to recover and hold in peace the rest of Bengal and to eschew convivial parties. Then he asked the Prince with a stern look : " Didst thou see ? " The Prince did not understand what his father meant to convey by this enigmatical question. The Sultan again said, " Didst thou see ? " The perplexed Prince returned to answer and the Sultan repeated the question for the third

time and added, "You saw my punishments in the bazar." The Prince bent down his head in profound submission, and the pitiless father addressed him in these words: "If ever designing and evil-minded persons should incite you to waver in your allegiance to Delhi and to throw off its authority, then remember the vengeance which you have seen exacted in the bazar. Understand me and forget not that if the governors of Hind or Sindh, of Malwa or Gujarat, of Lakhnauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependents will fall upon them, their wives, their children, and all their adherents." He called Bughra Khan again for a second interview and gave him valuable advice about political affairs. On the day of his departure, he embraced him affectionately and bade him farewell. On his return to Delhi he ordered gibbets to be erected again for the execution of those residents of Delhi and its environs, who had assisted in the late rebellion. It was with great difficulty that the Qazi of the army was able to persuade the Sultan to desist from such a frightful proceeding.

Death of Prince Muhammad.

The rebellion was effectively suppressed, but a great domestic bereavement befell the Sultan. When the Mongols under their leader, Samar, invaded the Punjab in 1285 A.D., his son, Prince Muhammad, who was placed in charge of Multan, marched towards Lahore and Dipalpur to repel their attack. He was defeated and killed in the encounter that followed, and his sacrifice won him the posthumous title of the "Martyr Prince." The Sultan was so stricken with grief that, shortly afterwards, he died in 1286 A.D., leaving a will in which he nominated his grandson Kai-Khusrau as his successor. No sooner were his eyes closed in death than the nobles and officers opposed his last testament and elevated Kaiqubad to the throne, an unhappy choice, which ultimately led to the fall of the Slave dynasty.

Balban's career, full of strenuous activity, extending over a period of forty years, is unique in the annals of mediæval India. He enhanced the dignity of the kingly office, and established peace and order by a policy of 'blood and iron.' He maintained a splendid court where he presented himself on public occasions with great magnificence. He always behaved like a well-bred oriental monarch ; his sense of kingly dignity was so great that he never appeared but in full dress even before his private servants. He never laughed aloud nor joked in his darbar ; nor did he permit any one to indulge in laughter or amusement in his presence. He despised the company of the low and the vulgar, and nothing could ever draw him into unnecessary familiarity either with friends or strangers. So punctilious was he in maintaining the prestige of his office that on one occasion he refused a proffered gift of some lākhs from a rich upstart who had accumulated a vast fortune, but who could not boast of a lofty pedigree. Low birth was the greatest disqualification for public office, and the nobles and officers never dared to recommend any but a well-born man for employment in the state. Balban was fond of wine in his youth, but he completely gave it up when he became king. He took delight in hunting excursions and often went out on long expeditions. In his private life he was a kind-hearted man. He loved his sons and relatives, and even towards strangers who sought shelter at his court, he behaved with great generosity. Though his lot was cast in stormy times, he took interest in letters and extended his patronage to literary men. All things considered, Balban was a most remarkable ruler who saved the infant Muslim State in India from the Mongol peril, and by establishing social order paved the way for the military and administrative reforms of Alauddin Khilji.

Personality of Balban.

Balban's death left a void that could not be filled. There

was none among his survivors who could wield the sceptre which he had swayed for twenty years with such ability and success. The personal factor counted for much in mediæval politics, and as soon as the master-hand of Balban was removed by death, the affairs of the state fell into confusion, and the old confidence in the justice and strength of the administration was completely shaken.

The fall of the Slaves.

Kaiqubad who was only seventeen years of age was elevated to the throne through the intrigues of the Kotwal of Delhi. From his childhood, he had been brought up with such care that he was never allowed to have even a look at a fair damsel, or taste a cup of wine. Day and night he was watched by his tutors who taught him the polite arts and manly exercises, and never permitted him to do an improper act or utter an indecent word. Such a prince found himself all of a sudden in the possession of a mighty kingdom, the vast wealth of which could afford everything that was needed for personal enjoyment. He cast to the winds all lessons of prudence and self-restraint, and at once changed his enforced puritanism for a life of debauch and pleasure. Balban's work was undone ; the example of the king was followed by the nobles and the ministers so that court life became notoriously corrupt, and men of all ranks gave themselves up to the pursuit of pleasure.

While Kaiqubad spent his time in drunken revels and orgies, the business of government was carried on by Malik Nizam-ud-din, son-in-law of the influential Kotwal of Delhi, who had deftly wormed himself into the confidence of the Sultan. Nizam-ud-din was a highly ambitious man ; his arrogance and ascendancy offended the veteran Khans, who had since the days of Aibek and Iltutmish served the state with signal devotion. Bughra Khan's absence in Bengal, the decline of the power of the nobles, and the intemperance and licentiousness of Kaiqubad led Nizam-ud-din to harbour designs

of usurping the throne at a favourable moment. But this nefarious plan could not succeed unless Kai Khusrau, the heir-designate of Balban, who still commanded the respect and esteem of the nobility, was got rid of. With such thoughts in his mind, the minister approached his insensate master, and obtained his assent to the prince's murder in a state of intoxication. The unsuspecting young prince was called away from Multan, and on his way to Delhi was murdered near Rohtak.

This murder sent a thrill of horror throughout the whole country. Parties were formed, and the Khilji Amir Jalal-ud-din Firuz, who held the office of the *Arīz-i-mamālik* (muster-master) placed himself at the head of a powerful faction. The power of Jalal-ud-din increased, and several Turkish Maliks and Amirs went over to his side, thinking that resistance was impossible. Two days later Sultan Kaiqubad was murdered in his palace of mirrors by a Khilji Malik, and his corpse was thrown into the Jamna.

Such was the inglorious end of the Slave kings of Delhi. Jalal-ud-din Firuz now obtained the support of friends and foes and ascended the throne at Kilughari. But the people of Delhi were hostile to the Khiljis; they extended no welcome to Firuz, and it took him some time to reconcile them to his usurpation.

The causes of Muslim success.

The conquest of Hindustan accomplished with great ease by the Muslims was primarily due to the weakness of the Hindu society which had lost its old vigour owing to mutual jealousies and dissensions. The whole country was split up into a number of independent states, often fighting against one another. There was no dearth of military talent in the country, for the Rajputs were the finest soldiers and were scarcely inferior to the Muslims in courage and determination. The Muslims came from the cooler regions beyond the Afghan hills and displayed much vigour and energy in actual campaign. They possessed better organisation, discipline and coherence. Islam is one

great brotherhood in which the high and low, the rich and poor are all alike and no distinctions are made between man and man. The practice of proselytism ordained by Islam inspired its followers with the fanatical zeal of the missionary which made them stand united in a solid phalanx against their enemies. As Lane-Poole says, "the very bigotry of their creed was an instrument of self-preservation ; in mere self-defence they must hold together as God's elect in the face of the heathen, and they must win over proselytes from the Hindus, whether by persuasion or by the sword, to swell their isolated minority." It was devotion to the faith which made them so violent and aggressive in dealing with non-Muslims. The Musalman cheerfully risked his life in the service of his faith and made the heaviest sacrifices. As compared with the Muslims, the Hindus were weak and divided and had only clan or caste interests to uphold. The caste system created artificial barriers which prevented the unification of the various groups for purposes of common defence and safety. Even the most distinguished generals and warriors found it difficult to shake off the influence of caste, and were often arrayed in hostile camps even when they were confronted by a common enemy.

The military system of the Hindus was out of date and old fashioned. Their too much dependence upon elephants was dangerous when they had to fight against fierce and well-trained cavalry leaders. Experience furnished ample warning, but it was constantly disregarded by Hindu generals who adhered with great tenacity to their old methods of warfare. The Musalmans had an excellent recruiting ground in the countries beyond the Afghan hills, from where they could constantly bring fresh levies to fight against the Hindu hosts. Large numbers of men, attracted by the wealth of India and the love of adventure, enrolled themselves in the armies of men like Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor, whereas the

Hindus had to confine themselves to one country and very often to a single principality, whose dimensions were not greater than those of a modern province. The political system of the Hindus restricted military duties to a particular class, so that the great mass of the people were either unfit for military service or indifferent to the political revolutions which shook Indian socity to its base. Every time, the Rajputs tried to check the advance of the foreigners, but unsupported by national will or national strength, they could not hold out long against such formidable foes. Thus, the Muslims, when they came in contact with the disunited and enfeebled races of Hindustan, found little difficulty in obtaining victory over them. The war between the two peoples was really a struggle between two different social systems, the one, old and decadent, and the other, full of youthful vigour and enterprise.

Another great source of strength to the Muslims was their slave system. Sometimes it produced extremely capable men like Īltutmish and Balban, who were infinitely superior to the average men who inherited crowns and kingdoms by the mere accident of birth. To be the slave of a great king or captain of war was looked upon as privilege in the Islamic east, and often men of servile origin were deemed equal or even superior to the purest aristocrats. Stanley Lane-Poole's remarks on the efficacy of the slave system deserve to be quoted : " While a brilliant ruler's son is apt to be a failure, the slaves of a real leader of men have often proved the equals of their master. The reason, of course, is that the son is a mere speculation. He may or may not inherite his father's talents; even if he does, the very success and power of the father creates an atmosphere of luxury that does not encourage effort; and good or bad, the son is an immovable fixture : only a father with an exceptional sense of public duty would execute an incompetent son to make room for a talented slave. On the other hand the slave is the 'survi-

val of the fittest;' he is chosen for physical and mental abilities, and he can hope to retain his position in his master's favour only by vigilant effort and hard service. Should he be found wanting, his fate is sealed."[9]

9 Mediæval India, page 64

CHAPTER VI

KHILJI IMPERIALISM

The throne of Delhi now passed into the hands of the Khilji Turks, and in a public *Durbar* held at Kilughari the soldiers and citizens all tendered fealty to the new Sultan. Gradually he established his authority, and the "excellence of his character, his justice, his generosity and devotion gradually removed the aversion of the people, and hopes of grants of land assisted in conciliating, though grudgingly and unwillingly, the affections of his people." Firuz was a good old man of seventy, who was averse to bloodshed and war, but his mildness and tenderness fostered sedition in the state and encouraged the spirit of rebellion and disorder. In the second year of the reign Balban's nephew Malik Chajjū, who held the fief of Kara, broke out into rebellion. He marched towards Delhi at the head of a considerable force, but when the royal army approached, his followers dispersed in fear. Those who were captured were brought before the Sultan who granted them a pardon and entrusted Kara to his nephew and son-in-law Alauddin.

Jalal-ud-din Khilji, 1290—96 A.D.

The Sultan's foreign policy was as weak and timid as his domestic policy. The expedition against Ranthambhor failed, and the Sultan's army returned in disappointment to the capital. Better sucess attended his arms when the Mongols invaded Hindustan under their leader Halākū. They were defeated and massacred in large numbers. At last peace was made with them and they were allowed to settle near Delhi. This policy had disastrous consequences : for Mughalpur became a centre of intrigue and disaffection and caused much anxiety to the rulers of Delhi.

Alauddin, the Sultan's nephew and son-in-law, was entrusted with the fief of Kara and Oudh. Removed from the control of the Sultan, Alauddin, who was an ambitious man, conceived the bold project of making a raid upon Devagir, which is one of the most memorable feats in the annals of mediæval India. He had heard of the fabulous wealth of Devagir, the capital of the Yādava Rajas of Mahārāshtra, and eagerly longed to obtain possession of it.

Alauddin's expedition to Devagir, 1294 A.D.

He marched at the head of 8,000 horse, and reached Elichpur not far from the frontiers of the Maratha kingdom. From Elichpur he proceeded towards Ghati-lajaura, at a distance of 12 miles from Devagir without encountering any opposition. When Ramachandra, the Raja of Devagir, heard of the enemy's advance, he shut himself up in his fortress and resolved to face the attack of the Muslims. Meanwhile Alauddin's troops entered the town and levied a heavy contribution upon the merchants and bankers. Ramachandra was frightened by the rumour that the Sultan was also coming towards the Deccan at the head of 20,000 horse, and he offered to make peace. He agreed to pay a ransom of fifty *mans* of gold, seven *mans* of pearls, and other valuable things in addition to forty elephants, some thousands of horses, and the plunder which he had already collected from the city.

When Ramachandra's son Śankara Deva heard of this peace, he hastened to the rescue of his father and asked Alauddin to store whatever booty he had seized from his father and to leave the province quietly. Alauddin treated this demand as an insult and proceeded to attack Śankara, leaving a thousand horse to invest the fort, but in the encounter that followed, the Maratha army defeated the Muslims and dispersed them in all directions. The arrival of the force which Alauddin had left to conduct the siege of the fort, infused a fresh hope into the Musalman army. A panic seized the Hindus, and they sustain-

ed a severe defeat. Enormous booty fell into the hands of the victorious general, who demanded the cession of Elichpur for the support of the garrison which he intended to leave behind. These terms having been accepted by Ramchandra, Alauddin returned to Kara in triumph.

The Sultan was delighted at the success of his nephew. Accompanied by a scanty retinue, he crossed the Ganges in a barge and met Alauddin with a few adherents. When the old man affectionately embraced him, he was murdered, and the royal party was put to the sword. The Sultan's head was paraded in the army, and Alauddin was proclaimed king of Delhi.

Alauddin's early difficulties.

On his accession to the throne Alauddin found himself confronted with a difficult situation. The Jalali nobles had not yet completely forgotten the murder of their good old chief, and secretly plotted to avenge it. The Queen-mother Malikā Jahān, whom Barani describes "as one of the silliest of the silly," fomented intrigues to push forward the claims of her own sons, Arkali Khan and Qadr Khan. The hostile nobles and Amirs were conciliated by lavish gifts and promotions to high office, while the common people were reconciled to the new regime by scattering gold stars amongst them from *manjniqs*. Malikā Jahān, who had raised to the throne Qadr Khan under the title of Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim, wrote to Arkali Khan at Multan asking him to come to Delhi, but he excused himself on the ground that the defection of the nobles had made the task of restoration absolutely impossible. When Alauddin reached near the capital, Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim came out of the city to oppose his progress but in the middle of the night, the left wing of his army went over to the enemy. The prince, taking some bags full of gold tankās and a few horses from the stables, made off for Multan. Alauddin then made his triumphal entry into the plain of Siri, where he received the homage of all parties. Barani describes the situation in these

words: "the throne was now secure, and the revenue officers and the keepers of elephants with their elephants, and the kotwals with the keys of the forts, and the magistrates and the chief men of the city came out to Alauddin, and a new order of things was established. His wealth and power were great; so whether individuals paid their allegiance or whether they did not, mattered little, for the Khutbā was read and coins were struck in his name."

Against the Mongols.

Having secured his power, Alauddin turned to combat the great danger of the ever-recurring Mongol raids. He completed the work of Balban and effectively garrisoned the frontier outposts of the kingdom. The Mongols came again and again, but they were repulsed with heavy losses. In the second year of the reign, Amir Daud, the ruler of Transoxiana, advanced with an army of 100,000 Mongols with a view to conquer Multan, the Punjab and Sindh, but Ulugh Khan drove them back with heavy losses. The Mongols did not mind this discomfiture and appeared again under their leader Saldi. Zafar Khan marched against them and captured the Mongol Saldi and his 2,000 followers, and sent them in chains to Delhi. But the most dreadful invasion of the Mongols occurred in the year 1298 A.D., when Qutlugh Khwaja, at the head of a countless host, advanced upon Delhi. A feeling of consternation spread among the population, and a war council was forthwith summoned by the Sultan to devise means of repelling the attack of the enemy. Zafar Khan and 'Ulugh Khan proceeded against them, and the Sultan himself took the field in person at the head of 12,000 well-equipped volunteers. The Mongols were defeated and dispersed, though Zafar Khan, the greatest warrior of the age, was slain in the thick of the fight. Just at this time, Targhi, another Mongol leader, appeared at the head of a considerable force, but the danger was averted through the good offices of Nizam-ud-din Aulia.

Notwithstanding these reverses, the Mongol raids did not cease, and in 1304 A.D., Ali Beg and Khwaja Tash, marching to the north of Lahore and skirting the Siwalik hills, made an incursion into Hindustan, and penetrated as far as Amroha. Ghazi Tughluq, who was warden of the marches at Dipalpur, marched against them and inflicted heavy losses upon them. This was followed by other raids, but Ghazi Tughluq again rose equal to the occasion and repulsed the invading hordes. When Iqbalmandā came with a large force, the Sultan sent an army against him. He was defeated and slain, and thousands of Mongols were massacred. Several of the Mongol Amirs who were commanders of one thousand or one hundred were captured alive, and were trampled under the feet of elephants by the order of the Sultan. The Mongols were so frightened by his forays into their country that they never appeared again in Hindustan. To guard his dominions against the Mongols, the Sultan adopted the frontier policy of Balban. All old forts that lay on the route of the Mongols were repaired, and veteran commanders were placed in charge of them. The outposts of Samana and Dipalpur were garrisoned and kept in a state of defence. The royal army was considerably strengthened, and in the workshops of the state engineers were employed to manufacture weapons of all kinds, to fight against the enemy.

The grand designs of the Sultan.

Having got rid of these nomad hordes, Alauddin turned his attention to foreign conquest. Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan had conquered Gujarat and Nehrwala, and subjected the merchants of Cambay to a heavy blackmail. The Baghela Rajput, Karan, had fled from his country, leaving his wife and children to be captured by the invaders in 1297 A.D. From all sides came the news of success, and enormous booty flowed into the coffers of the Sultan. Barani writes: "All this prosperity intoxicated him. Vast desires and great aims far beyond him

formed their germs in his brain, and he entertained fancies which had never occurred to any king before him. In his exultation, ignorance and folly, he quite lost his head, forming the most impossible schemes and nourishing the most extravagant desires. He was bad-tempered, obstinate and hard-hearted, but the world smiled upon him, fortune befriended him and his schemes were generally successful, so he only became the more reckless and arrogant." He became so presumptuous that he began to cherish the dream of founding a new religion and going out into the world in search of conquest like Alexander the Great. On these ambitious schemes he used to expatiate in the following manner :—"God Almighty gave the blessed Prophet four friends, through whose energy and power the law and religion were established, and through this establishment of law and religion the name of the Prophet will endure to the day of judgment. God has given me also four friends, Ulugh Khan, Zafar Khan, Nusrat Khan, Alap Khan, who, through my prosperity, have attained to princely power and dignity. If I am so inclined, I can, with the help of these four friends, establish a new religion and creed; and my sword, and the swords of my friends, will bring all men to adopt it. Through this religion, my name and that of my friends will remain among men to the last day, like the names of the Prophet and his friends . . . I have wealth, and elephants, and forces beyond all calculation. My wish is to place Delhi in charge of a vicegerent, and then I will go out myself into the world, like Alexander, in pursuit of conquest, and subdue the whole habitable world."

Qazi Ala-ul-mulk, uncle of the historian Zia Barani, was consulted by the Sultan, who thus expressed his opinion on the subject : "Religion and law spring from heavenly revelation; they are never established by the plans and designs of men. From the days of Adam till now they have been the mission of Prophets and Apostles, as rule and government have been the

duty of kings. The prophetic office has never appertained to kings, and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some Prophets have discharged the functions of royalty. My advice is that Your Majesty should never talk about these matters. Your Majesty knows what rivers of blood Changiz Khan made to flow in Muhammadan cities, but he never was able to establish the Mughal religion or institutions among Muhammadans. Many Mughals have turned Musalmans but no Musalman has ever become a Mughal." On the subject of conquest the Qazi thus expressed his opinion: "The second design is that of a great monarch for it is a rule among kings to seek to bring the whole world under their sway; but these are not the days of Alexander, and where will there be found a Wazir like Aristotle . . . There were two important undertakings open to the king, which ought to receive attention before all others. One is the conquest and subjugation of all Hindustan, of such places as Ranthambhor, Chittor, Chanderi, Malwa, Dhar and Ujjain, to the east as far as the Saryu, from the Siwalik to Jalor, from Multan to Damrila, from Palam to Lahore and Dipalpur; these places should all be reduced to such obedience that the name of rebel should never be heard. The second and more important duty is that of closing the road of Multan against the Mughals." Before closing his speech, the Qazi said: "What I have recommended can never be accomplished unless Your Majesty gives up drinking to excess, and keeps aloof from convivial parties and feasts . . . . . If you cannot do entirely without wine, do not drink till the afternoon, and then take it alone without companions." The Sultan appreciated the Qazi's advice and richly rewarded him.

Conquest of Rajputana.

With the full concurrence of his ministers and generals, Alauddin now resolved to capture the famous fortress of Ranthambhor in 1299. Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan marched from their respective fiefs towards Rajputana at the head of a large

army, and succeeded in capturing the fortress of Jhain. Ranthambhor was besieged, but during the siege the imperial commandant Nusrat Khan, while he was superintending the construction of a redoubt, was struck with a stone discharged from a catapult (*maghribi*) in the fort. The wound proved fatal, and the brave man succumbed to it after a couple of days. Rana Hammir came out of the fort, and in a short time drew to his banner 200,000 well-equipped men, with whose help he delivered a tremendous attack upon the Muslims, and compelled Ulugh Khan to fall back upon Jhain with heavy losses. When the news of this disaster reached the Sultan, he proceeded in person towards Ranthambhor, but on his way he was attacked and wounded by his nephew Aqat Khan, who wished to seize the throne with the help of some disaffected new-Muslims. But his attempt failed, and he was punished with death for his treason. There were other conspiracies to deprive the Sultan of his throne but they were successfully put down. Freed from this danger, the royalists concentrated their full vigour upon Ranthambhor, and the siege was pushed on for a whole year. By means of bags filled with sand, the besiegers escaladed the walls of the fortress, and forcibly obtained possession of it. Hammir and his family were put to death, and so were the remanant of the garrison, who had heroically battled for their chief to the last.[1] Ranmal, the minister of the Rana, paid in full the penalty of his defection by suffering an ignominious death. But even in these bloody annals, we, now and then, come across men of true heroism and loyalty. When Mir Muhammad Shah, a Mongol general in the service of Hammir, lay wounded on the field of battle, Alauddin asked him what he

[1] The frightful rite of "Jauhar" was performed, and in Amir Khusrau's words, one night the Rai lit a fire at the top of the hill, and threw his women and family into the flames, and rushing on the enemy with a few devoted adherents, they sacrificed their lives in despair.

would do if he ordered his wounds to be dressed and saved his life from peril. In scornful pride the vanquished hero replied, "If I recover from my wounds, I would have thee slain and raise the son of Hammir Deo upon the throne." Such fidelity was rare indeed in the Muslim camp where an atmosphere of intrigue and self-seeking prevailed, and though the spirited warrior was thrown down under the feet of an elephant to be trampled unto death, the victor's heart was touched by his manliness, and he ordered a decent burial to be accorded to him. The fort was taken in July, 1301, and the palaces and other forts of the "stinking Rai" were razed to the ground. Having placed Ulugh Khan in charge of Ranthambhor and Jhain, the Sultan returned to the capital.

Emboldened by this success, Alauddin directed his forces against Mewar, the premier state of Rajputana. No Muhammadan ruler had yet ventured to penetrate into that secluded region, protected by long chains of mountains and deep forests. The physical features of Mewar rendered it difficult for any conqueror to bring it under his effective sway, and the fort of Chittor, situated on a hill-top, strongly fortified by nature, had always defied the foreign invader. Cut out of a huge rock, the famous fortress stood in its awful grandeur, overlooking the vast plain below, where the Hindu and Muslim hosts were to engage each other in a death grapple. But the impregnability of the fortress did not deter the ambitious Sultan from attempting its conquest; and in 1303 he marched his forces against Mewar. The immediate cause of the invasion was his passionate desire to obtain possession of Padmini, the peerless queen of Rana Ratan Singh, renowned for her beauty all over Hindustan. It is no longer necessary to repeat the story of the chivalrous manner in which the Rana agreed to gratify the Sultan's wish by allowing him to behold the princess through the medium of mirrors, and the foul treachery of Alauddin in capturing him when he accompanied him out of courtesy to

the outer gate of the fortress. From his camp he sent word to the Rani that her husband would be released if she chose to go into the *haram*. But how could the Rajputs brook this indelible stain upon their national honour? They debated amongst themselves as to the course which was to be adopted. Like a brave Rajput matron more anxious for the honour of her race than for her own safety, the queen expressed her willingness to abide by their decision. She consented to go to the Muslim camp, and Alauddin, whose reason was clouded by lust, permitted her to do so in a manner befitting her rank and dignity. Seven hundred covered litters containing brave Rajput warriors, well-equipped with arms proceeded to the royal camp and demanded the strictest privacy. They rescued the Rana and carried him off to Chittor. A deadly fight raged at the outer gate of the fort, where the Rajputs bravely resisted the invaders, but, at last, they were overpowered. When they saw that there was no chance of escape, they prepared to die after the manner of their race. The frightful rite of *jauhar* was performed and the fairest ladies of the royal family perished in the flames. Amir Khusrau, who accompanied the Sultan during this expedition, gives a detailed account of the siege. He writes: 'The fort of Chittor was taken on Monday, the 11th Muharram, 703 A.H. (August 26, 1303). The Rai fled, but afterwards surrendered himself. After ordering a massacre of thirty thousand Hindus he bestowed the government of Chittor upon his son Khizr Khan and named the place Khizrabad. He bestowed upon him a red canopy, a robe embroidered with gold and two standards—one green and the other black—and threw upon him rubies and emeralds. He then returned towards Delhi. All accounts agree that the fight before Chittor was terrible.

Some modern writers are of opinion that the story of Padminī is a myth. It is true that there is no mention of it in contemporary writings. Among Muslim historians it is

mentioned only by Firishta and Hājji-ad-Dabīr, the author of the *Arabic History of Gujarat*, though the two writers differ as to details. In the present state of our knowledge it cannot be said that Muslim historians borrowed the story from Malik Muhammad Jāyasī, the author of the Hindi poem *Padmāvat*. The subject needs further investigation before any final conclusion can be reached.

The fort was entrusted to Prince Khizr Khan and the town was re-named Khizrabad. Khizr Khan remained in Chittor for some time, but about the year 1311 he was obliged to leave it owing to the pressure of the Rajputs. The Sultan then made it over to the Sonigrā chief Maldeva who held it for seven years, at the end of which period it was recovered by Rana Hammir by means of trachery and intrigue. Under Hammir Chittor once more regained its former splendour and became one of the premier states in Rajputana.

The fall of Chittor was followed by the submission of the Rai of Malwa, who fought against the armies of Islam at the head of a large force, but he was defeated and killed, and Malwa was placed in charge of a Muslim governor. Soon afterwards the cities of Mandu, Ujjain, Dharanagari and Chanderi were conquered, and their rulers were compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Khilji war-lord. By the end of 1305 A.D., practically the whole of Northern India came into the hands of Alauddin, and the policy of imperialism of which he was the author and champion gathered a fresh momentum with every new conquest and annexation.

The Deccan—Conquest of Devagir.

Having conquered Northern India, the Sultan turned his attention to the Deccan. The physical features of the country, the hostility of Hindu Rajas, the long distance from the capital of the empire—all made its permanent subjugation difficult, if not impossible. But Alauddin was not the man to flinch back from his resolve. He invested his slave Kafur with

the supreme command of the royal forces. On his way to the Deccan, Kafur passed through Malwa and Gujarat and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Karan, the Baghela ruler, who was obliged to surrender owing to shortage of supplies. Ulugh Khan, the Sultan's brother, forcibly seized Devaldevi, the daughter of Rai Karan, who was admitted into the royal seraglio and was afterwards married to Prince Khizr Khan, the heir-apparent. Kafur laid waste the whole country and secured the submission of Ramchandra Yādava who was sent to court. He was well received by the Sultan who conferred upon him the title of *Raya Rāyān*.

The defeat of the Yādavas of Devagir prepared the way for the fall of the other Hindu princes of the south. In 1309 Kafur started on his expedition against the Kākatīya Rajas of Warangal[2] in Telingana. Marching through difficult and inhospitable regions, he reached before the fort of Warangal. Raja Pratap Rudra Deva, called Ladar Deo by Muslim historians, shut himself up in the fort and offered stubborn resistance. The fort, in the words of Amir Khusrau, was so strong that a spear of steel could not pierce it, and if a ball from a western catapult were to strike against it, it would rebound like a nut, which children play with. After a prolonged siege, Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya submitted and sued for peace. He agreed to pay annual tribute and "sent a golden image of himself, with a gold chain round its neck in acknowledgment of his submission;" but Kafur refused to listen to his overtures. In vain did the Brahman plenipotentiaries of the Kākatiya prince plead for quarter for their master. The relentless general promised to desist from a general massacre of the Hindus, only on the condition that their chief should give up all his treasures, and agree to send tribute annually to Delhi.

Conquest of Warangal.

[2] Warangal was the ancient capital of Telingana.

Driven to extremities, Pratap Rudra Deva accepted the humiliating conditions, and purchased his safety by offering a large booty. Kafur, with the laurels of victory on his brow, "left Warangal and returned to Delhi with a thousand camels, groaning under weight of treasure," in March 1310, by way of Devagir, Dhar and Jhain.

Conquest of Mábar.

The success which attended this expedition and the vast wealth that flowed into the coffers of the state as the result of his enterprises, strengthened Alauddin's belief in his destiny, and he resolved to extend the limits of his empire to the farthest extremity of the South. Dvārasamudra and Mábar[3] still remained outside the pale of his empire. Under Vīra Ballāla III, the son of Nara Siṁha, the Hoysala dominions above and below the Ghāts were reunited; and this powerful ruler held sway over the whole of Kangū and a portion of the Konkan and the whole of what is now known as the Mysore country.[4] Ballāla was a capable prince, who, like the other Hindu princes of his day, had consolidated his power by abolishing vexatious imposts and granting charitable religious endowments. Bitter rivalry existed between the Hoysalas and the Yādavas, and each tried to ruin the other. At last these mutual feuds and strifes disabled both of them and made room for a third power, namely, the Muslims. On November 18, 1310, the royal army under the leadership of Kafur left Delhi, and having crossed deep rivers, ravines, and mountain valleys, reached the country of Mábar. Vīra Ballāla suffered a crushing defeat and

3 Mábar is the name given to the strip of land which according to Wassāf, Marco Polo and Abul Feda extended from Kulam to Nilāwar (Nellore). Wassāf writes in his *Tazriyāt-ul-Amsār* that Mábar extended from Kulam to Nilāwar (Nellore), nearly three hundred parasangs along the sea-coast. (Elliot, III, p. 32.)

4 Vīra Ballāla was crowned in 1292 A.D., and died fighting against the Turks in 1342 A.D.

surrendered himself to the victorious general. But Kafur was not satisfied with mere surrender ; he informed the Rai that he must either embrace Islam or accept the position of a *Zimmi*.[5] The Rai accepted the latter alternative, paid a huge war indemnity, and became a vassal of Delhi. The Muslims captured a large booty, which consisted of 36 elephants and an abundant quantity of gold, silver, jewels, and pearls. Vīra Ballāla was sent to Delhi along with the elephants and horses, and a reference to this visit occurs in his inscriptions.

Kafur next turned against the Pandyas of Madura. What gave the Muslims their long-desired opportunity was a quarrel between the two brothers Sundara Pandya and Vīra Pandya, an illegitimate son of the ruler of the Pandya kingdom. He set out for the Deccan at the head of a large army. Amir Khusrau in his *Tarikh-i-Alai* gives a graphic account of the progress of this valiant general through the distant and inaccessible regions of the south. On his way he seized elephants and demolished temples at several places, and on the 17th of Zilqadā, 710 A.H. (April 1311), he arrived at '*Kham*' from where he marched towards Madura, the capital of the Pandya kings. The Rai fled on the approach of the invaders who captured elephants and destroyed temples. According to Amir Khusrau the booty seized consisted of 512 elephants, five thousand horses and five emeralds and rubies. It appears Kafur reached as far as Rāmeśvaram, a well-known place of Hindu pilgrimage. The great temple was plundered, the idol destroyed, after which Kafur returned to Delhi towards the close of the year 1311. Having subdued the whole country, Kafur returned to Delhi on the 4th Zil-hijja, 710 A.H. (April 24, 1311 A.D.), laden with the spoils of war, and was accorded a cordial welcome by the

[5] A *Zimmi* is an unbeliever who does not accept Islam, but for a monetary consideration is allowed security of life and property.

Sultan. The victory was proclaimed from the pulpits, and rich rewards were distributed among the nobles and officers of the empire.

After Rāma Deva's death, his son Śankara Deva had ceased to pay the customary tribute and had refused to fulfil the obligations of an ally during Kafur's expedition against the Hoysalas. Alauddin's wrath was kindled at this infidelity, and for the fourth time the slave warrior was sent to the Deccan at the head of a large force in 1312 A.D. The whole of Mahārāshtra was ravaged, and the Yādava prince was, after a feeble resistance, defeated and beheaded. The whole of South India now lay at the feet of Kafur, and the ancient dynasties of the Cholas, the Cheras, the Pandyas, the Hoysalas, the Kākatiyas, and the Yādavas were all overthrown, and made to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi. By the end of 1312 Alauddin's empire embraced the whole of the north and south and all the leading princes owned his sway.

Defeat of Śankara Deva.

Alauddin was opposed to the interference of the *'ulamā* in matters of state, and in this respect he departed from the traditions of the previous rulers of Delhi. The law was to depend upon the will of the monarch, and had nothing to do with the law of the Prophet—this was the guiding maxim of the new monarch. The Sultan's political theory is clearly set forth in the words which he addressed to Qazi Mughis-ud-din, whom he consulted about the legal position of the sovereign power in the state. He upheld the royal prerogative of punishment and justified the mutilation of dishonest and corrupt officers, though the Qazi declared it contrary to canon law. Then the Sultan asked him, "That wealth which I acquired while I was a Malik, with so much bloodshed at Devagir, does it belong to me or to the public treasury?" The Qazi replied, "I am bound to speak the truth to your Majesty. The treasure

Alauddin's theory of kingship.

obtained at Devagir was obtained by the prowess of the army of Islam, and whatever treasure is so acquired belongs to the public treasury.[6] If your Majesty had gained it yourself alone in a manner allowed by the law, then it would belong to you." The Sultan flared up with wrath and asked the Qazi how such treasure could belong to the state. The Qazi meekly answered, "Your Majesty has put to me a question of law ; if I were not to say what I have read in the book, and your Majesty to test my opinion were to ask some other learned man, and his reply, being in opposition to mine, should show that I had given a false opinion to suit your Majesty's pleasure, what confidence would you have in me, and would you ever afterwards consult me about the law?"

The Qazi was confronted with a fresh question about the rights of the king and his children upon the public treasury, the *Bet-ul-māl*. Frightened by the Sultan's stern demeanour, the Qazi screwed up courage with great difficulty to return a reply and said, "If your Majesty will follow the example of the most enlightened Khalifas, and will act upon the highest principle, then you will take for yourself and your establishment the same sum as you have allotted to each fighting man, two hundred and thirty-four tankās. If you would rather take a middle course and should think that you would be disgraced by putting yourself on a par with the army in general, then you may take for yourself and your establishment as much as you have assigned to your chief officers, such as Malik Kirān and others. If your Majesty follows the opinions of politicians, then you will draw from the treasury more than any other great man receives, so that you may maintain a greater expenditure than any other, and not suffer your dignity to be lowered. I have put before your Majesty three courses, and all the crores of money and valuables which you take from the treasury and

6 The public treasury is called the '*Bet-ul-māl*' in legal anguage.

bestow upon women you will have to answer for on the day of account." The Sultan was filled with wrath and threatened the Qazi with severe punishment. When he again recounted his proceedings, the Qazi placed his forehead on the ground and cried with a loud voice, "My liege! whether you send me, your wretched servant, to prison, or whether you order me to be cut in two, all this is unlawful, and finds no support in the sayings of the Prophet, or in the expositions of the learned." The exponent of the canon law knew that his fate was sealed, but to his utter astonishment when he went to the court the next day, the Sultan treated him kindly and handsomely rewarded him. With a politeness which was agreeably surprising, he explained to the Qazi his doctrine of kingship in these significant words:—"To prevent rebellion in which thousands perish, I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands; I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience. *I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree and as for what may happen to me on the approaching day of Judgment that I know not.*" This new doctrine of sovereignty was the outcome of the circumstances of the time. The people readily acquiesced in it, and cared nothing for the claims of the *'ulamā* They tamely submitted to him because he gave them the much coveted gifts of peace and order. The support which he received from public opinion made him irresistible as long as he lived.

He stamps out sedition.

Alauddin brought to bear upon his methods of administration ability and insight, which we rarely find in men endowed with mere military genius. Rebellions and conspiracies roused him from his lethargy, and convinced him of the necessity of undertaking drastic measures to put an end to sedition in the state. He

calmly sat down to find out the causes of political disorders, and came to the conclusion that they were due to four things :—(1) the Sultan's disregard of the affairs of the nation, (2) wine-drinking, (3) friendship and frequent social intercourse of the Maliks, Amirs, and grandees of the empire, and (4) superfluity of wealth which intoxicated men's minds and fostered treason and disaffection.

This searching analysis led to a highly repressive legislation, and the first measure which the Sultan undertook was the confiscation of property. All gratuities, pensions and endowments were confiscated to the state, and all the villages that were held as *milk* (in proprietary right) or *inām* (in free gift), or *waqf* (as charitable endowment) were resumed and incorporated with the crown lands. The fear of conspiracy and murder upset the Sultan, and he established an elaborate system of espionage, by which he tried to keep himself informed of the doings of his officials and subjects. The spies reported everything that took place in the houses of the nobles, and often in their zeal to win royal favour, they carried the silly gossips of the bazar to the ears of the emperor. Spirituous liquor was strictly forbidden ; and the Sultan himself set an example by giving up the habit of drink. All the china and glass vessels of the Sultan's banqueting room were broken into fragments, and "jars and casks of wine were brought out of the royal cellars, and emptied at the Badāon gate in such abundance, that mud and mire was produced as in the rainy season." But this regulation weighed too heavily upon the people, and wine was secretly brought into the city by vintners. The nobles were permitted to drink individually at their houses, but all social intercourse was strictly prohibited. All festive gatherings and convivial parties were forbidden in private as well as public houses, with the inevitable result that the amenities of social life disappeared, and life became an intolerable burden.

Treatment of the Hindus.

The Hindus were treated with special severity. In the Doab they had to pay 50 per cent of the total produce of their land without making any deductions, and so rigorous was the assessment that not even a *biswah* of land was spared. A grazing tax was imposed upon cattle, and a house-tax was also levied. The same regulations were applied to the *khūts* and the *balāhars*[7] so as to save the poor from the heavy burden of taxation. So rigorously were the new rules enforced, 'that the *chaudhrīs*, *khūts*, and *muqaddams* were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel.' The policy of the state was that the Hindus should not have so much as to enable them to ride on horseback, wear fine clothes, carry arms and cultivate luxurious habits. They were reduced to a state of abject misery to such an extent that the wives of the *khūts* and *muqaddams* went and served for hire in the houses of the Musalmans. Barani speaks highly of the wazir of the empire and says that he brought all the provinces under one revenue law as if they were all one village. He investigated all cases of embezzlement and inflicted the severest punishment upon the wrong-doers. If the ledger of the *patwari* showed a single *jital* standing against the name of any officer, he was punished with torture and imprisonment. The post of revenue clerk came to be looked upon as dangerous, and only the bolder spirits offered themselves as candidates for it.[8]

7 *Khūt* and *balāhar* are obviously used for landed classes. Most probably they are used here for landlords and tenants. [Elliot, III (Appendix), p. 623.]

8 Barani writes (Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 289) that the office of revenue clerk fell into such bad odour that nobody would give his daughter in marriage to him and the post of mushrif was accepted only by those who did not pay any heed to their lives. These men were frequently cast into prison.

Alauddin was a true militarist. He saw clearly that his empire could not be maintained without a permanent standing army. With this object in view he undertook military reform. He fixed the pay of a soldier at 234 tankās a year and that of a man with two horses at 78 tankās more. But it was impossible to maintain a large army unless the necessaries of life were cheapened. For this reason the Sultan fixed the prices of all commodities required for daily use. Grain was to be stored in royal granaries and in the Khalsa villages of the Doab, the revenue of the state was realised not in cash but in kind. The prices of all articles of food were fixed, and the shopkeepers were severely punished, if they did not observe these regulations. Spies and agents were employed who reported to the Sultan the condition of the market.

Organisation of the army and the control of the market.

All merchants, whether Hindus or Musalmans, had to register themselves and to enter into engagements by which they bound themselves to bring their articles to the *Serai adl*, an open space inside the Badāon gate, where all articles were exposed for sale. Advances were made from the treasury to these wealthy and respectable Multani traders, to enable them to purchase goods in large quantities. The Diwan issued permits to those Maliks and Amirs who purchased costly articles. This device was adopted to prevent merchants from buying articles in the market at cheap rates and then selling them at higher rates in the country.

The market was superintended by two officers—the *Diwan-i-riyasat* and the *Shahna-i-mandi*. These officers performed their duties with the strictest honesty and regularity. The cattle market was also controlled, and the price of cattle fell considerably. Horses of the first class could be purchased for 100 to 120 tankās, of the second for 80 to 90, of the third for 65 to 70 tankās, while small ponies could be had for 10 to 25 tankās. A milch cow could be had for three or four tankās and a she-

goat for ten or twelve or fourteen *jitals*. The prices of slaves and maid-servants fell considerably. The punishments for the violation of the tariff laws were exceptionally severe. If the shopkeeprs weighed less, an equal quantity of flesh was cut off from their haunches to make up the deficiency in weight. The vendors were frequently kicked out of their shops for dishonest dealings. The result of all this was that the bazar people became quite submissive, and ceased to practise deceit and often gave more than the fixed quantity.

These reforms succeeded well enough. The increased strength and efficiency of the army guaranteed security against Mongol invasions, and held in check the refractory Rajas and chieftains. All sedition was stamped out, and men's habits were so disciplined that crime was considerably lessened. The cheapness of the necessaries of life increased the happiness of the people, and bound them more closely to the personal despotism of the emperor. Though the stress of war pressed too severely upon the resources of the state, numerous works of public utility were constructed, and the emperor extended his patronage to the learned and the pious. Amir Khusrau, the poet-laureate of the empire, shed lustre on his reign, and pious men like Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia and Shaikh Rukn-ud-din did not a little to augment its prestige, but the most important result of these measures was the solidity which they imparted to the central government. The disorderly habits of the grandees of the empire were put down with a high hand, and all particularism was kept under firm control. The governors in the distant provinces obeyed the orders of the emperor with perfect obedience. The agents of the government were allowed no freedom of action, and the disregard of the royal will was treated as a grave offence for which severe punishments were laid down.

The results of reforms.

The foundations of the political system which Alauddin had

built up were unsound. The new discipline which he had imposed upon the people drove discontent deep underground. The Hindu Rajas, who had been deprived of their independence, sullenly brooded over their losses and waited for an opportunity to strike a blow for their freedom. The nobles, accustomed to a life of gaiety, were sick of the obnoxious laws which they had to obey ; the merchants resented the policing of the market, while the Hindus groaned under the humiliations inflicted upon them. The new Muslims always plotted and intrigued against the Sultan. Overcentralisation, repression, and espionage, all undermined the imperial authority. As the emperor advanced in years, he became violent and whimsical, and his suspicious nature estranged from him the sympathies of his leading nobles. To form a class of officials entirely dependent on himself, he raised base-born men to positions of honour and eminence. Too much depended upon the personality of the Sultan in this age ; and Alauddin made the mistake of minimising the importance of this powerful factor in the politics of his day. He neglected the education of his sons, and under Kafur's influence he treated them with great severity. Besides, Kafur secretly intrigued to obtain power for himself. He induced the emperor to execute a will nominating his son, Shihāb-ud-din, heir to the throne. The authority of the emperor ceased to command respect, and insurrectionary movements were set on foot in the outlying provinces of the empire. In the words of the Muslim chronicler, "Fortune proved, as usual, fickle ; and destiny drew her poniard to destroy him," and the mighty monarch 'bit his own flesh with fury,' as he saw the work of his lifetime being undone before his eyes. In the midst of these distressing circumstances, the emperor who was already in the grip of a mortal disease, died in 1316, and was buried in a tomb in front of the Jam-i-masjid.

Weakness of the system.

Alauddin was by nature a cruel and implacable despot. He swept aside the dictates of religious and canon law, if they interfered with his policy. He had no regard for kinship and inflicted punishments without distinction. He possessed the qualities of a born military leader and a civil administrator and kept his vast possessions under firm control as long as he lived. He clearly saw the dangers of his time and guarded against them. He enjoyed the confidence of his soldiers and his example fired their zeal. In organising his civil administration he displayed great originality and mental vigour, and his control of the market is one of the marvels of mediæval statesmanship. He ruled with a strong hand and exercised personal supervision over the conduct of his officials. No one was allowed to take a pice from the cultivators, and fraudulent practices were sternly put down. He was himself illiterate, but extended his patronage to the learned and pious, and granted stipends and lands for their maintenance. Among the early Muslim rulers he was the first who had the courage to oppose the orthodox policy of the *'ulamā,* and who represented in his person to the fullest extent the virility and vigour of Islam.

Estimate of Alauddin.

Alauddin's death was a signal for civil war and the scramble of rival parties for power. Malik Kafur removed from his path the princes of the blood royal one by one, and produced a spurious will of the late Sultan in which Omar Khan was nominated heir to the throne. As Omar was a little child of six years of age, Kafur himself became regent and began to manage the affairs of the state. The first thing he did was to destroy the survivors of Alauddin. All the princes except Mubarak Khan were put into prison or murdered, and Kafur bestowed the highest offices on his favourites. This policy caused discontent among the supporters of the old regime. A conspiracy was formed, and the slaves of Alauddin with the

The weak successors of Alauddin.

help of the army killed Kafur and his leading partisans. After Kafur's death Mubarak Khan succeeded to the throne under the title of Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah in 1316 A.D.

Qutbuddin Mubarak Shah.

Mubarak began his reign well. He released the political prisoners, restored the confiscated lands to their owners, and abolished the numerous taxes which clogged the progress of trade and industry. Barani writes that the regulations of Alauddin fell into disuse, and men reverted to their old ways and habits. But there was no serious rebellion except that of Raja Harapala Deva of Devagir in 1318 ; it was quickly suppressed and the rebel was flayed alive. Khusrau, a man of low caste from Gujarat, who had become a special favourite of the Sultan, undertook an expedition to Telingana which met with great success. The Rai submitted and ceded to Khusrau five districts and promised to pay an annual tribute of ' more than a hundred strong elephants as large as demons, 12,000 horses, and gold, jewels and gems beyond compute.'

Good fortune spoiled Mubarak. He became proud, vindictive and tyrannical and indulged in the worst excesses. He lost all regard for decency and morality and often appeared in public in the company of harlots. There was a great demand for dancing girls, and the price of a boy or handsome eunuch, or beautiful girl varied from 500 to 1,000 and 2,000 tankās. The Sultan cast all decency to the winds when he allowed his unworthy associates to insult in foul and obscene language the distinguished nobles of the court. Khusrau's influence increased every day, and he conspired with his castemen to bring about the king's death. The Sultan was informed of Khusrau's evil intentions, but he paid no heed to the advice of his well-wishers. One night the conspirators entered the palace and murdered the Sultan. A court was hastily improvised at midnight hour, and with the forced

consent of the nobles and officers Khusrau mounted the throne in 1320 under the title of Nāsiruddin.

A Dynastic Revolution.

Khusrau began what the Muslim historians call a reign of terror. He seized the treasures of the state, and conferred lavish gifts upon the people at large to win their support. Islam was treated with contempt, and the old nobles and officers had to make room for Khusrau's kinsmen. The Alai nobles who had served the state in the past were filled with grief at this deplorable state of affairs. There was one among them who planned the overthrow of Khusrau. He was Fakhruddin Jūnā, who afterwards ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Tughluq. He communicated everything to his father Ghazi Malik, the Warden of the Marches at Depalpur. The veteran warrior was moved with indignation and swore vengeance upon the 'unclean' *Parwārīs*. He was joined by all the nobles of the empire except the governor of Multan who bore a personal grudge against him.

The news of Ghazi Malik's approach alarmed Khusrau, and he began to organise his forces. The army of Delhi, demoralised by indolence and debauchery, was no match for the sturdy Muslims who followed the banner of Ghazi Malik. Lack of experienced generalship, added to want of discipline, made the cause of Khusrau from the outset hopeless. When the two armies came face to face, each side began to plan dexterous manœuvres to overpower the other. The rickety forces of Khusrau were routed and fled in confusion. The cause of the Parwārīs was doomed, and they were so frightened that 'hardly any life was left in their bodies.'

Having seized considerable spoil, the victorious general commenced his march towards Delhi to deal a decisive blow. Driven to despair, Khusrau looked for help in all quarters. Like one 'despised by fortune or worsted in gambling,' he brought out all the treasures and distributed them among the

soldiers to prevent defection in the royal army. But this prodigality proved of no avail ; the soldiers, who knew that Ghazi Malik's cause was just and righteous, accepted Khusrau's gold, but abandoned all intention of fighting under his colours. Once more the usurper made a desperate effort to save himself, and the forlorn hope of the Delhi army fought a hotly contested engagement, in which they carried everything before them. Khusrau fled from the field of battle but he was captured and beheaded. His supporters were diligently traced out ; they were charged with treason and made to suffer the fate which they so richly merited. Ghazi Malik received the congratulations of the assembled nobles, who offered him the keys of the palace. The old leader shrank from the burden of the kingly office, and enquired if there was any survivor of the stock of Alauddin. The nobles answered in the negative and dwelt upon the confusion and disorder that prevailed in the empire owing to the abeyance of authority. With one voice they appealed to him to assume the insignia of royalty and placed him upon the throne. Zia Barani, who is an orthodox chronicler, writes with exultation : "Islam was rejuvenated and a new life came into it. The clamour of infidelity sank to the ground. Men's minds were satisfied and their hearts contented. All praise for Allah." The election of a plebeian to the kingly office demonstrated in an unmistakable manner the democratic spirit of Islam, and reaffirmed the principle of the survival of the fittest, which dominated and controlled the Muslim State in India in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

CHAPTER VII

THE TUGHLUQ DYNASTY

(1320—1412 A.D.)

Ghazi Malik, the Warden of the Marches, ascended the throne under the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. He was a man of humble origin; his father was a Qaraunā Turk,[1] and his mother was a Jat woman of the Punjab. He had risen to high position by dint of personal merit, and in the time of Alauddin had played an important part in wars against the Mongols whom he had chased out of the country again and again. When he assumed the reins of office, the empire of Delhi was in a state of confusion, and it was with great tact, prudence, and firmness that Ghiyas restored order and recovered the moral prestige of the monarchy. The magnanimity of his nature showed itself in the generous treatment which he meted out to the relatives of Alauddin. He made a suitable provision for them and appointed them to high offices in the state. No just claim was ignored and no past service was forgotten. The claims of rank and birth were respected, and many families that had been ruined were restored to their former dignity.

Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. 1320—25 A.D.

Having settled the affairs of the empire, Ghiyas ordered

[1] Ibn Batūtā writes that he heard from Shaikh Ruknuddin Multani that Sultan Tughluq was of the stock of Qaraunā Turks who lived in the mountainous region between Sindh and Turkestan. In his early life he was very poor and was obliged to take up service under some merchant in Sindh. Later he joined the army, and by sheer dint of merit rose to high position.

an expedition against Warangal, the capital of the Kākatiya Rajas of Telingana. Pratap Rudra Deva II had greatly increased his power during the reign of Mubarak Khilji. The Crown Prince was sent at the head of a large force to deal with him. After a desperate fight the Raja surrendered, and the whole country was subdued. The glory and greatness of the Kākatiyas ended, and henceforward they ceased to exist as a predominant power in Southern India.

Expedition against Warangal.

The administration of Ghiyas was based upon the principles of justice and moderation. The land revenue was organised and the Sultan took great care to prevent abuses. The jagirs granted by Khusrau were resumed, and the finances of the state were set in order. The cultivators were treated well and officials were severely punished for their misconduct. The departments of justice and police worked efficiently, and the greatest security prevailed in the remotest parts of the empire. The army was also organised. The soldiers were treated with kindness and liberality. Strict discipline was enforced and arms and weapons were amply provided.

Administration of Ghiyas.

Towards the close of his reign in 1324 the Sultan marched towards Bengal to restore to the throne the Princes of Lakhnauti, who had been expelled by their brother Bahadur. Bahadur was punished, and the dispossessed princes were reinstated in their territory. When the Sultan returned to Delhi, he was killed by the fall of a pavilion which his son, Prince Jūnā, had erected near Afghanpur at a distance of six miles from the capital in 1325. The prince was suspected of having planned the emperor's death for the hasty construction of such a palace was entirely superfluous. Whatever the real truth may be, there are strong reasons for thinking that the Sultan's death was the result

Death of Ghiyas.

of a conspiracy in which the Crown Prince took part and not of accident.

Ghiyas was a mild and benevolent ruler. He loved simplicity, and towards his quondam colleagues he behaved with the same frank joviality which had characterised him in his earlier days. A pious and peace-loving Muslim, he practised rigidly the observances of his faith and always tried to promote the welfare of his co-religionists. Unlike many other Muslim rulers he lived a pure life and eschewed every kind of pleasure. As long as he lived he took the best care of his subjects and ruled with a strong hand. A new life was infused into the administration which had been thrown out of gear during the reigns of the imbecile Mubarak and the 'unclean' Khusrau. The following verse of Amir Khusrau is illustrative of the Sultan's excellent methods of government:

Estimate of Ghiyas-ud-din.

> "He never did anything that was not replete with wisdom and sense,
> He might be said to wear a hundred doctors' hoods under his crown."

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was succeeded by his son, Prince Jūnā, under the title of Muhammad Tughluq in 1325 A.D. He was unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages. Of all kings, who had sat upon the throne of Delhi since the Muslim conquest, he was undoubtedly the most learned and accomplished. Nature had endowed him with a marvellous memory, a keen and penetrating intellect and an enormous capacity for assimilating knowledge of all kinds. The versatility of his genius took by surprise all his contemporaries. A lover of the fine arts, a cultured scholar and an accomplished poet, he was equally at home in logic, astronomy, mathematics, philosophy and the physical sciences. No one could excel him in composition and calligraphy; he had at his command a good deal of Persian poetry, of which he made a

Personality of Muhammad.

very extensive use in his writings and speeches. He was an adept in the use of similes and metaphors, and his literary productions were saturated with the influence of the Persian classics. Even the most practised rhetoricians found it difficult to rival the brilliance of his imagination, the elegance of his taste and his command over the subtleties and niceties of expression. He was a master of dialectics, well-versed in Aristotelian logic and philosophy, and theologians and rhetoricians feared to argue with him. Barani describes him as an eloquent and profoundly learned scholar, a veritable wonder of creation, whose abilities would have taken by surprise such men as Aristotle and Āsaf.[2] He was highly generous, and all contemporary writers are unanimous in extolling his lavish gifts to the numerous suppliants who crowded his gate at all times. He was a strict Muslim who rigidly practised and enforced the observances laid down in the Holy Book. But he was not an unrelenting bigot like some of his predecessors. His liberalism is reflected in his desire to be tolerant towards the Hindus and in his humane attempt to introduce ameliorative reforms like the suppression of *Sati* which was in vogue in the fourteenth century.

The Moorish traveller, Ibn Batūtā who came to India in 1333 A.D., thus describes the Sultan:—"Muhammad is a man who, above all others, is fond of making presents and shedding blood. There may always be seen at his gate some poor person becoming rich, or some loving one condemned to death. His generous and brave actions and his cruel and violent deeds, have obtained notoriety among the people. In spite of this, he is the most humble of men, and the one who exhibits the greatest equity. The ceremonies of his religion are dear to his heart, and he is very severe in respect of prayer and the punishment which follows its neglect. He is one of those

[2] Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 461.

kings whose good fortune is great and whose happy success exceeds the ordinary limit ; but his distinguishing character is generosity. I shall mention among the instances of his liberality some marvels of which the like has never been reported of any of the princes who have preceded him."

Superficially viewed, the Sultan seems to be an amazing compound of contradictions. But he is not really so. The charges of blood-thirstiness and madness, brought against him by later writers, are mostly unfounded. No contemporary writer gives the barest indication of the Sultan's madness. The charge of blood-thirstiness was bolstered up by the members of the clerical party whom the Sultan treated with open disregard. It is true, he was, like all mediæval despots, subject to great paroxysms of rage, and inflicted the most brutal punishments upon those who offended against his will, irrespective of the rank or order to which they belonged ; but this is quite a different thing from stigmatising him as a born tyrant, taking delight in the shedding of human blood. A close examination of the alleged murders and atrocities of the Sultan will reveal the unsoundness of the common view that he found pleasure in the destruction of human species and organised 'man-hunts.' The truth is that the Sultan combined a head-strong temper with advanced ideals of administrative reform, and when his subjects failed to respond to his wishes, his wrath was terrible. His impatience was the result of popular apathy just as popular apathy was the outcome of his startling innovations.

Taxation in the Doab.

The earliest administrative measure which the Sultan introduced was the enhancement of taxation in the Doab. Barani says that 'it operated to the ruin of the country and the decay of the people,' while another historian, who is more cautious in his remarks, says that 'the duties levied on the necessaries of life, realised with the utmost rigour, were too great for the

power of industry to cope with.' The taxes in the Doab were raised, according to Barani, out of all proportion to the income of the people, and some oppressive *abwabs* (cesses) were also invented which broke the back of the ryot, and reduced him to utter poverty and misery. All historians dwell upon the distress which was caused by this fiscal measure, and Barani, whose native district, Baran, also suffered from the effects of this enhancement, bitterly inveighs against the Sultan. He greatly exaggerates the suffering and misery caused to the population when he says that the ryots of distant lands, on hearing of the distress and ruin of the people in the Doab, broke out into open rebellion and threw off their allegiance. Unfortunately this measure was carried out at a time when a severe famine was prevailing in the Doab, and the distress of the people was greatly aggravated by its disastrous effects. But this does not exonerate the Sultan altogether from blame ; for his officials continued to levy taxes at the enhanced rate with the utmost rigour, and made no allowance for famine. It was long afterwards, that he ordered wells to be dug and loans to be advanced to agriculturists to promote cultivation in the affected areas. The remedy came too late ; the famished population, whose patience was sorely tried by the long duration of the famine, failed to profit by it, and gave up the ghost in despair. Never were benevolent schemes of reform more cruelly frustrated by an evil fate than in the case of Muhammad Tughluq.

Transfer of the capital, 1326-27 A.D.

Another measure, which entailed much suffering on the population, was the transfer of the capital to Devagir which was re-christened Daulatabad. The empire had grown to large dimensions ; towards the north it embraced the Doab, the plains of the Punjab and Lahore with the territories stretching from the Indus to the coast of Gujarat ; towards the east it comprised Bengal, and in the centre it included such

principalities as Malwa, Ujjain, Mahoba and Dhar. The Deccan had been subdued, and its principal powers had acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi. Having fully weighed in his mind the drawbacks of Delhi[3] as an imperial capital, he decided to transfer it to Daulatabad which was more centrally situated. It was situated at a safe distance from the route of the Mongols who frequently threatened the neighbourhood of Delhi and made life and property insecure. It is clear that the change was not dictated by the mere caprice of a cruel despot. Obviously, considerations of safety and better government alone urged the Sultan to take such a bold step. As regards his possessions in Hindustan, he hoped to exercise control over them with the aid of the simple means of communication which existed between the north and south.[4]

This change might have been effected without causing much hardship, if the Sultan had remained satisfied only with the removal of the official machinery of the state. But he made an egregious blunder in ordering the people of Delhi, men, women and children, to go *en masse* to Daulatabad with all their effects. All sorts of facilities were provided ; a road was built from Delhi to Daulatabad and food and accomodation were freely supplied to the emigrants. Those who had no money to feed themselves during the journey were fed at the expense of the state, and the Sultan was " bounteous in his liberality and favours to the emigrants, both on their

3 Barani mentions the following provinces of the empire at the beginning of Muhammad's reign :—(1) Delhi, (2) Gujarat, (3) Malwa, (4) Devagir, (5) Telang, (6) Kampila, (7) Dhorsamundar, (8 Mabar, (9) Tirhut, (10) Lakhnauti, (11) Satgāon, (12) Sonārgāon.

Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth, Ind., p. 468.

4 Ibn Batūtā's statement that the people of Delhi dropped anonymous letters full of abuse ino the king's *Diwan*, and the king took so much offence at this that he ordered the capital to be changed, is based upon hearsay, for when the transfer took place in 1326-27 A.D. he was not present in India.

journey and on their arrival."[5] But all these concessions and favours proved of no avail. The people, who had lived in Delhi for generations, and to whom the city was endeared by numerous associations, left it with broken hearts. The sufferings attendant upon a long journey of 700 miles were incalculable, and a great many of them, wearied with fatigue and rendered helpless by home-sickness, perished in the way, and those who reached their journey's end found exile in a strange, unfamiliar land unbearable, and "gave up the ghost in despair." Barani writes that the Muslims, struck with despondency, laid down their heads in that heathen land, and of the multitude of emigrants only a few survived to return to their homes.[6]

The unwarranted assumption of Ibn Batūtā that a search was instituted in Delhi under a royal mandate to find out if any of the inhabitants still lurked in their houses, and that it resulted in the discovery of two men, one lame and the other blind, who were dragged to Daulatabad, is based upon mere bazar gossip, invented afterwards to discredit the Sultan. It is true, the Sultan's orders were carried out in a relentless manner, but it is a calumny to assert that his object was to cause needless suffering to the population. It must be said to his credit that, when he saw the failure of his scheme, he ordered the inhabitants to go back to Delhi, and on the return journey

5 Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth, Ind., p. 474. Elliot, III, p. 239.

6 Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth, Ind., p. 474. Elliot, III, p. 239.

Zia Barani writes: "So complete was the ruin, that not a cat or a dog was left among the buildings of the city, in its palaces or in its suburbs." A statement of this kind made by an oriental writer of the middle ages is not to be taken too literally. European scholars, unaccustomed to Indian forms of speech, have made this mistake. Dr. Smith uncritically accepts Ibn Batūtā's story related above.—(Oxford History of India, p. 239.)

treated them with great generosity and made full amends for their losses. But Delhi was a depopulated city. From far and near, the Sultan brought learned men, merchants, and landholders to take up their abode in the deserted capital ; but no inducement proved of any avail to reconcile them to the changed surroundings. The old prosperity did not return, and Delhi did not recover her former grandeur, for the Moorish traveller found it in 1334 A.D. uninhabited in some places and still bearing the marks of desolation.

Daulatabad remained, as Lane-Poole remarks, a monument of misdirected energy. The scheme of transfer failed disastrously. That it would have, in the event of success, enabled the Sultan to keep a firm hold upon the different parts of the empire, may well be doubted. He failed to see that Daulatabad was situated at a long distance from the northern frontiers of the empire, which needed to be constantly watched with vigilance. He disregarded the warning which experience amply furnished that Hindu revolts and Mongol inroads might at any time jeopardise his possessions in the north. If such a contingency were to arise, it would have been an extremely difficult task for the Sultan, pressed by the half-subdued races of the Deccan and the nomad hordes of Central Asia to cope with the forces of disorder.

The token currency, 1330 A.D.

Muhammad Tughluq has rightly been called the prince of moneyers. One of the earliest acts of his reign was to reform the entire system of coinage, to determine the the relative value of the precious metals and to found coins which might facilitate exchange and form convenient circulating media. But far more daring and original was his attempt to introduce a token currency. Historians have tried to discover the motive which led the Sultan to attempt this novel experiment. The heavy drain upon the treasury has been described as the principal reason which led to the issue of the token coins. It cannot be denied

that a great deficiency had been caused in the treasury by the prodigal generosity of the Sultan, the huge expenditure that had to be incurred upon the transfer of the capital and the expeditions fitted out to quell armed rebellions. But there were other reasons which must be mentioned in giving an explanation of this measure. The taxation policy in the Doab had failed ; and the famine that still stalked the most fertile part of the kingdom, with the consequent decline in agriculture, must have brought about a perceptible fall in the revenue of the state. It is not to be supposed that the Sultan was faced with bankruptcy ; his treasury was not denuded of specie for he subsequently paid genuine coins for the new ones, and managed a most difficult situation with astonishing success. He wished to increase his resources in order to carry into effect his grand plans of conquest and administrative reform, which appealed so powerfully to his ambitious nature. There was another reason : the Sultan was a man of genius who delighted in originality and loved experimentation. With the examples of the Chinese and Persian rulers before him, he decided to try the experiment without the slightest intention of defrauding or cheating his own subjects as is borne out by the legends on his coins. Copper coins were introduced and made legal tender ; but the state failed to make the issue of the new coins a monopoly of its own. The result was as the contemporary chronicler points out in right orthodox fashion, that the house of every Hindu—of course as an orthodox Muslim he condones the offences of his co-religionists—was turned into a mint and the Hindus of the various provinces manufactured lakhs and crores of coins. Forgery was freely practised by the Hindus and the Muslims ; and the people paid their taxes in the new coin and purchased arms, apparels, and other articles of luxury. The village headmen, merchants, and landowners suppressed their gold and silver, and forged copper coins in abundance, and paid their dues with them. The result of this

was that the state lost heavily while private individuals made enormous profits. The state was constantly defrauded for it was impossible to distinguish private forgeries from coins issued by the royal mint. Gold and silver became scarce ; trade came to a stand-still and all business was paralysed. Great confusion prevailed ; merchants refused to accept the new coins which became as "valueless as pebbles or potsherds."[7] When the Sultan saw the failure of the scheme, he repealed his former edict and allowed the people to exchange gold and silver coins for those of copper. Thousands of men brought these coins to the treasury and demanded gold and silver coins in return. The Sultan who meant no deception was defrauded by his own people, and the treasury was considerably drained by these demands. All token coins were completely withdrawn and the silence of Ibn Batūtā who visited Delhi only three years later proves that no disastrous results ensued, and the people soon forgot the token currency.

The failure of the scheme was inevitable in the India of the fourteenth century. To the people at large copper was copper, however benevolent the intentions of the Sultan might be. The Sultan who pitched his expectations too high made no allowance for the conservative character of the people, whose acceptance of a token currency even in modern times is more in the nature of a submission to an inevitable evil than a willingness to profit by the use of a convenient circulating medium. The mint was not a state monopoly ; and the Sultan failed to provide adequate safeguards to prevent forgery. Elphinstone's statement that the failure of the token currency was due to the king's insolvency and the instability of his government is not justified by facts, for the Sultan withdrew all coins at once, and his credit remained unshaken. Mr. Gardner Brown has ascribed this currency muddle to the shortage in the world's supply of

[7] Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 486.

silver in the fourteenth century. Soon after his accession Muhammad Tughluq introduced a gold *dinar* of 200 grains and an *adali* or a silver coin of 140 grains in place of the gold and silver *tankās* which had hitherto been in use, and which had weighed 175 grains each. The introduction of the gold *dinar* and the revival of the *adali* show that there was an abundance of gold and a relative scarcity of silver in the country. The prize money brought by Kāfūr from the Deccan consisted largely of jewellery and gold, and it was this which had brought about a fall in the value of gold. The scarcity of silver continued even after the death of Sultan Muhammad. Only three silver coins of Firuz have come to light, and Edward Thomas mentions only two pieces of Muhammad bin Firuz, one of Mubarak Shah, one of Muhammad bin Farid, and none of Alam Shah and his successors of the Lodi dynasty, and it is not until the middle of the 16th century that we come across a large number of silver coins, issued from the mints of Sher Shah Suri and his successors. Regarding the failure of this scheme, Edward Thomas, a numismatist of repute, has rightly observed, "There was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the royal mint and the handiwork of the moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of the Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper token, and no limit to the power of production by the masses at large."

The liberal character of the administration.

Muhammad Tughluq adopted a policy which ran counter to the cherished prejudices of the orthodox school. He levied many taxes in addition to the four legal ones[8] prescribed by the Quran, and showed a greater regard for the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus than his predecessors had ever done. Unlike his weak-minded cousin Firuz, he was no un-

[8] The four legal taxes are *Khirāj*, *Zakat*, *Jeziya* and *Khamsa*.

reasonable bigot. His culture had widened his outlook, and his converse with philosophers and rationalists had developed in him a spirit of tolerance for which Akbar is so highly praised. He employed some of them in high positions in the state,[9] and like the great Akbar after him tried to stop the horrible practice of *Sati*. The independent Rajput states were left unmolested ; for the Sultan knew that it was impossible to retain permanent possession of such strongholds as Chittor and Ranthambhor—a policy which was not liked by the clerical party. He continued Alauddin's practice of appropriating four fifths of the share of plunder to himself, leaving the rest to the soldiers. But the feelings of the *'ulamā* were deeply embittered, when he deprived them of the monopoly of the administration of justice. His love of justice was so great that he personally looked into the details of the judicial administration, and submissively accepted the decrees of the courts passed against himself.

He made himself the Supreme Court of Appeal, and when his Judgment differed from that of the *Muftis*, he overruled them and adhered to his own view. To curtail the influence of the orthodox party, he invested some of the distinguished officers of the state with judicial powers in spite of the fact that they were not *Qazis*, *Muftis*, or professed canonists. He was very strict in administering justice. He laid his hands freely upon the members of the priestly class when they were found guilty of rebellion, open sedition, or embezzlement of public funds. Neither birth nor rank, nor piety availed aught to afford protection to an offender from the punishment which his guilt merited.

9 Ibn Batūtā speaks of a Hindu, Ratan by name, who was in the Sultan's service. The traveller praises his skill in finances. Ibn Batūtā, Paris ed., III, pp. 105-106.

and that is why Ibn Batūtā who had visited many lands and seen a great deal of men and affairs, recorded the verdict, when he was in his own country, no longer afraid of the Sultan's wrath, that "of all men this king is the most humble, and of all men he most loves justice."

The Sultan organised the services of the State on an efficient basis. As there was a dearth of capable officers in the country, he employed foreigners in his service and bestowed rich rewards and gifts upon them. This policy caused discontent among the native nobility and led to rebellions in the empire. The Sultan's generosity knew no bounds. He maintained several departments, two of which are specially worthy of mention—the department of presents which regulated the giving and taking of presents and the Industrial Department which managed the preparation of costly fabrics for the use of the royal ladies and the wives of the nobles.

The Sultan's schemes of conquest.

The Sultan like his great predecessor Alauddin cherished magnificent schemes of foreign conquest. Early in the reign he was induced by some Khorasani nobles who had sought refuge at his court to attempt an invasion of their country. There was nothing fantastic or absurd in the plan. The condition of Khorasan under Abu Said had become highly unsatisfactory. The Chaghtai chief Tarmashirin Khan and the ruler of Egypt were eager to grab Persian territory. Muhammad who had established friendly relations with the ruler of Egypt collected a large army containing 370,000 men who were paid for one whole year from the public treasury. But the scheme did not materialise. The task was beyond the strength of the armies of Delhi at this period. It was an act of wisdom on the part of Muhammad Tughluq to abandon the scheme and to concentrate his attention upon India.

Another project which has brought much odium upon the Sultan was the so-called Chinese expedition. All modern

writers[10] on Indian history, following the lead of Firishta, have made the mistake of supposing that the expedition was aimed against China. But the contemporary chronicler, Barani, says that the design of the Sultan was to conquer the mountain of Qarāchal or Qarājal which lies between the territories of Hind and China. Ibn Batūtā states clearly that the expedition was directed against the Qarājal mountain, which is situated at a distance of ten stages from Delhi. This shows that the mountain meant was Himāchal (the Himalayas), which constitutes an impassable barrier between China and India. The expedition was obviously directed against a refractory hill chieftain who had refused to own the suzerainty of Delhi. The first attack of the imperialists was a success, but when the rainy season set in, the troops became demoralised, and it became impossible to obtain supplies from the headquarters. The troops suffered heavily, and the entire baggage of the army was plundered by the wily mountaineers. Only ten horsemen returned to tell the story of this terrible disaster. But the object of the expedition was realised; the mountain prince made peace with the Sultan and agreed to pay tribute, for it was impossible for him to cultivate the low lands at the foot of the hills without acknowledging the authority of the ruler of Delhi, of whose kingdom they formed a part.

[10] Briggs, Firishta, I, p. 416.

Elphinstone, History of India, p. 396.

Firishta writes: "Having heard of the great wealth of China, Muhammad Tughluq conceived the idea of subduing that empire; but in order to accomplish his design it was found necessary first to conquer the country of Himāchal." He further says that the nobles and councillors of the king tried to convince him of the futility of the scheme, but failed to do so. Barani's testimony is, of course, more reliable. Ibn Batūtā supports Barani.

From the year 1335 there was a perceptible decline in the fortunes of Muhammad Tughluq. It was due partly to his harsh policy in the latter years of his life, and partly to famine, which continued for several years and produced enormous suffering in all parts of Hindustan. When public revenue, the principal mainstay of the administration, decreased, rebellions broke out in all parts of the empire. The earliest rebellion of importance was that of Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah in Mābar, which occurred in 1335 A.D.[11] Although Delhi was in a deplorable condition owing to the famine and lawlessness prevailing in its vicinity, the Sultan marched in person to chastise the rebel; but when he reached Telingana, cholera broke out and carried off a large number of men belonging to the king's retinue. The expedition against Ahsan Shah was abandoned under the pressure of unforeseen troubles and he was allowed to become independent.

The disorders of the reign—Ahsan Shah's revolt.

Bengal had never been a loyal appanage of the empire of Delhi since the days of Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyar. Fakhr-ud-din, the armour-bearer of Qadr Khan, the governor of Lakhnauti, slew his master and usurped his territories in 737-38 A.H. (1337 A.D.). Taking advantage of the state of confusion into which the affairs of the kingdom of Delhi had fallen, he proclaimed himself independent ruler of Bengal and struck coins in his own name. The Sultan, who was busily occupied with greater troubles in other parts of his wide dominions, could not pay attention to this upstart rebel. As there was no interference

Rebellion in Bengal.

[11] The date 1338-39 given by Smith on page 242 in his Oxford History of India is incorrect.

Ahsan Shah rebelled in 1335 A.D. He began to issue coins as an independent ruler in this year. Dr. Hultzsch who has examined these coins with care assigns this rebellion to 1335 A.D.

J.R.A.S. 1909, pp. 667—83.

from him, Fakhr-ud-din successfully overcame the local opposition to his assumption of royal power. He soon brought the whole country under his control and governed it with ability and vigour.

The rebellion in Bengal was followed by others of less importance, but they were speedily put down. The most important rebellion, however, was that of Ain-ul-mulk, the governor of Oudh and Zafrabad, which broke out in the year 1340-41. Ain-ul-mulk was a distinguished nobleman who had rendered great services to the state, and who was held in high favour at court. When the Sultan removed his court to Saragdwari in the Farrukhabad district on account of famine, Ain-ul-mulk and his brothers rendered great assistance in mitigating its severity. A singular lack of foresight on the part of the Sultan drove the loyal governor into rebellion. Having heard of the misconduct of certain Deccan officers, the Sultan decided to appoint Ain-ul-mulk governor of that country and ordered him to go there with his family and dependents. This peremptory order of transfer took the Malik by surprise. His ears were poisoned by those persons who had sought shelter in Oudh and Zafrabad to escape from the wrath of the Sultan. All of a sudden, Ain-ul-mulk, who suspected danger, revolted, and with his brothers seized the entire royal baggage which was in his charge. The Sultan was at first dumbfounded at the news of this revolt, but he at once devised measures to strengthen his forces. He paid special attention to the *morale* of the army, and himself superintended the operations. After a prolonged and stubborn fight, Ain-ul-mulk was defeated and brought as a prisoner to the royal camp. His associates were cruelly put to death, but he was pardoned in recognition of his past services and appointed superintendent of the royal gardens.

Revolt of Ain-ul-mulk, 1340-41 A.D.

Destiny allowed no respite to this unlucky monarch, and no sooner did he quell disturbances in one quarter than

troubles of greater magnitude broke out in another. This evil was the greatest in Sindh. The Sultan marched thither with his forces and scattered the ruffians. Their leaders were captured and forced to embrace Islam. By the end of the year 1342 A.D., order was established in Hindustan, but disorders of greater magnitude soon afterwards broke out in the Deccan. They assumed formidable dimensions, and the Sultan found himself powerless to stamp out sedition and overcome resistance to his own authority.

Suppression of brigandage in Sindh.

The Deccan was a hot-bed of intrigue and seditious conspiracy. In the early part of the reign, the Sultan had effectively brought under his sway such distant provinces as Mābar, Warangal and Dwārsamudra, and his empire embraced practically the whole of the Deccan. But Mābar became an independent principality in 1335, and in 1336 Hari Hara and his brother Bukka founded the kingdom of Vijayanagar as a protest against the Muslim power, of which a full account will be given later. In 1344 Kanya Nāik or Krişņa Nayak, son of Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya, organised a confederacy of the Hindus of the south. The great Deccan revolt began, and through the efforts of Ballāla IV, Hari Hara and Krişņa Nayak, followed by many lesser leaders, it finally culminated in the disappearance of Muslim power in Warangal, Dwārsamudra and the country along the Coromandel coast. The fall of the Hoysalas in 1346 A.D. enabled Hari Hara to place his power upon a firm footing, and henceforward Vijayanagar became a leading state in the south and a bulwark against the Muslim invasions from the north.

The Deccan.

Gujarat and Devagir alone were left in the hands of Muhammad Tughluq. His many failures had soured his temper, and he had lost that quality of human sympathy without which no conciliation of hostile people is possible. He

removed Qutlugh Khan, the veteran governor of Devagir, from his office, and appointed his brother in his place—an arrangement which caused much discontent in the country. The revenue declined, and the officers of the state began to extort money for themselves from the hapless ryots. The recall of Qutlugh Khan was followed by a fresh blunder in the massacre of the foreign Amirs by the foolish vintner's son, Aziz Khummār, who had been entrusted with the fiefs of Malwa and Dhar. The crime of Aziz produced a feeling of consternation among the Amirs and they took up arms in self-defence. Disorder rapidly spread in the Deccan, and the troops became mutinous everywhere. The Sultan proceeded in person to suppress the rebellion in Gujarat, and from Broach he sent a message to Nizam-ud-din Ālim-ul-mulk, brother of Qutlugh Khan, the new governor of Daulatabad, asking him to send the foreign Amirs immediately to the royal camp. The Amirs of Raichur, Mudgal, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Berar and other places obeyed the royal command and started for Gujarat, but on the way a sudden panic seized them, and they entertained the suspicion that the Sultan intended to take their lives. They attacked the royal escort, killed some of the men in a skirmish that followed, and returned to Daulatabad where they seized Nizam-ud-din and made him prisoner. The fort of Daulatabad fell into their hands ; they seized the royal treasure, divided the Maratha country amongst themselves, and elected one of their leaders, Malik Ismail Makh Afghan, as their king. When the Sultan received intelligence of these developments, he marched towards Daulatabad and defeated the rebels in an open engagement. Malik Makh Afghan entrenched himself in the fort of Devagir, and Hasan Kāngū, another Afghan leader, with his followers went away in the direction of Gulbarga. The Sultan laid siege to Daulatabad and sent his general Imad-ul-mulk Sartez in pursuit of the rebels. Daulatabad was recovered ; but soon afterwards the

Sultan had to leave the place on account of the rebellion of Taghi in Gujarat. As soon as the Sultan's back was turned, the foreign Amirs, once again, made a vigorous effort to recover their lost power. They besieged the fort of Devagir and baffled the attempts of the imperialists to recapture it. The imperial general Imād-ul-mulk was defeated in an action by Hasan, and the rebels occupied Daulatabad. Ismail Makh whom they had chosen as their king " voluntarily and gladly " resigned in favour of Hasan, a young and high-spirited warrior, who had taken a prominent part in these campaigns. Hasan assumed sovereignty under the title of Alauddin wad-din Abul-Muzaffar Bahman Shah on August 13, 1347 A.D. Thus was founded the famous Bahmani kingdom, of which a full account will be given in another chapter.

The death of the Sultan.

Hearing of the rebellion of Taghi, the Sultan left Devagir for Gujarat. It was a mistake on his part to resolve to put down the traitor Taghi before dealing effectively with the foreign Amirs. He pursued the rebel from place to place, but the latter succeeded in eluding his grasp. He subdued the Rai of Karnal and brought the entire coast under his sway. From there he proceeded to Gondal where he fell ill and was obliged to halt for some time. Having collected a large force he marched towards Thatta, but when he was about three or four days' march from that place, he got fever and died on March 20, 1351 A.D.

Estimate of Muhammad.

Such was the end of this unlucky monarch. All his life, he had battled against difficulties and never abandoned his task in despair. It is true, he failed, but his failure was largely due to circumstances over which he had little or no control. A severe famine which lasted for more than a decade marred the glory of his reign and set his subjects against him. The verdict that declares him a cruel and blood-thirsty tyrant like Nero or Cali-

gula does little justice to his great genius, and ignores his conspicuous plans to cope with famine and his efforts to introduce ameliorative reforms. There is ample evidence in the pages of Barani and Ibn Batūtā to show that he was not fond of shedding blood for its own sake, and that he could be kind, generous and just even towards his enemies. He possessed an intellect and a passion for practical improvement which we rarely find in mediæval rulers. But his task was an extremely onerous one. He had to deal with the problems of an ever-growing empire with a staff of officers who never loyally co-operated with him. He had also to reckon with the orthodox *'Ulamā* who clamoured for privilege and who resented his attempt to enforce justice and equality among his subjects.

All modern writers repeat the charge of madness against the Sultan, but neither in the pages of Ibn Batūtā nor in the history of Barani is there any mention of it. The charge of blood-thirstiness is equally untenable. The Sultan was no monster of iniquity who loved crime for its own sake. He inflicted severe punishments on the wrongdoers, but punishments were always severe in his day both in Europe and Asia. There is little point then in the denunciations of European writers, who are always severe in judging the actions of oriental statesmen and rulers. In pronouncing a verdict on Muhammad we must bear his difficulties in mind.

A most interesting source of information regarding the reign of Muhammad Tughluq is the account of his travels given by the Moorish traveller, Ibn Batūtā.

Ibn Batūtā.

Abu-Abdulla Muhammad, commonly known as Ibn Batūtā, was born at Tangier on the 24th February, 1304 A.D. He had an inborn liking for travel, and as soon as he grew to manhood, he made up his mind to fulfil his heart's desire. At the early age of 21, he started on his journey, and after wandering through the countries of Africa

and Asia, he came to India through the passes of the Hindukush. He reached the Indus on the 12th September, 1333; thence he proceeded to Delhi where he was hospitably received. He was appointed Qazi of Delhi by Muhammad Tughluq and admitted to his court, where he had close opportunities of acquainting himself with the habits, character, and acts of this most extraordinary monarch. He lived in India for eight years and left the service of the Sultan in 1342. He throws much light on the customs and manners of both Hindus and Muslims in those days and supplements Zia Barani in many respects. He was sent on an embassy to China on a diplomatic mission by Muhammad Tughluq, but he was prevented by unforeseen circumstances from fulfilling it. He returned to his native land in 1349 and there recorded his experiences. He died at the age of 73 in 1377-78.

There can be no doubt about the general veracity of Ibn Batūtā, for his statements are very often corroborated by other historians. He describes the gifts and punishments, the kindnesses and severities of his patron with considerable impartiality. His view of the Sultan's character is corroborated by Zia Barani who is more fulsome in his adulations and less balanced in his denunciations. The character of Ibn Batūtā, as it is reflected in the pages of his narrative, is profoundly interesting. Full of freshness, life, daring, a kind of superstitious piety, and easy confidence, Ibn Batūtā is a man of extravagant habits, prone to fall into pecuniary difficulties, out of which he is more than once extricated by his indulgent patron, to whom he clung like a veritable horse-leech as long as he lived in India.

The accession of Firuz Tughluq.

The death of Muhammad Tughluq near Thatta plunged the entire royal camp into confusion, and a feeling of despair seized the leaders of the army as well as the rank and file. The Mongol mercenaries who had come to assist in the expedition against

Taghi began to plunder the royal camp, and the army found it difficult to retreat in safety towards the capital. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that Muhammad had left no male heir, and it was apprehended by the nobles that disastrous consequences might follow, if they did not at once proceed to choose a successor. Barani who was an eye-witness of these events writes that the late Sultan had nominated Firuz as his heir-apparent, a statement which is corroborated by another contemporary writer, Shams-i-Siraj Afif. According to this testament of the late Sultan they offered the crown to Firuz and appealed to him to save the families of the generals and soldiers from the Mongols by accepting it. Firuz, who was utterly devoid of ambition and who wished to lead the life of a religious recluse at first demurred to the proposal, and said that he contemplated a pilgrimage to Mecca. But the pressure of the nobles became irresistible, and at last he had to concede to their wishes in the interests of the state. Firuz's acceptance of the crown had a calming effect on the army, and order was quickly restored. But in Delhi the Khwājā Jahan's attempt to set up a supposititious son of Muhammad had created a serious situation. The Khwājā cannot be charged with treason, for he had done so in public interest on receiving the news of the disappearance of Firuz and Tatar Khan, the principal leaders of the imperial army, from the field of battle. Firuz enquired of the nobles and officers of the state if the late Sultan had left a son, and received a reply in the negative. The Khwājā repented of his conduct, and with every mark of abject submission appeared before Firuz to implore forgiveness. The latter was inclined to take a lenient view of his offence on the score of his past services, but the nobles refused to condone what they described as "unpardonable treason." The Khwājā was asked to go to the fief of Samana, but on his way he was murdered. Thus did the weak and irresolute Firuz acquiesce

in the murder of a trusted friend and colleague of whose guiltlessness he was probably fully convinced.

Firuz Tughluq mounted the throne on the 24th March, 1351 A.D., with little ambition and less fitness for that high position. The contemporary Muslim chroniclers have bestowed lavish praise upon him, for his reign marked the beginning of that religious reaction, which became a prominent feature of his administrative policy. Barani writes that since the days of Muiz-ud-din Muhammad bin Sam, there was no ruler of Delhi, so humble, merciful, truth-loving, faithful and pious. Shams-i-Siraj Afif pronounces upon him a fulsome eulogy, and extols his virtues in terms of hyperbolical praise. He was a bigot who observed the Holy Law with great strictness, and on the occasion of religious festivals behaved like a pious Muslim. He encouraged his 'infidel' subjects to embrace Islam and exempted the converts from the payment of the Jeziya. The Brahmans were taxed, and their protests were contemptuously disregarded. All decorations in the royal palace were forbidden. The Sultan himself used earthen vessels instead of plates of gold and silver for dining purposes. But his vaunted devotion to the Quran did not prevent him from seeking the gratification of his lower appetites. On one occasion, in the midst of a campaign, when Tatar Khan paid him a visit, he saw him lying half naked with wine cups concealed in his bed. The Khan reproached him for this depravity, and the Sultan promised to observe abstinence as long as Tatar Khan was with the army. But the weakness of will soon asserted itself, and the Khan was transferred to the neighbourhood of Hisar Firuzā.

Character of Firuz.

Though rigidly orthodox, Firuz was generous and humane. He behaved towards his co-religionists with great generosity and liberally helped the poor and the unemployed. His kindness is reflected in his reform of the legal system. He abolished torture, simplified the legal procedure, and discouraged

espionage. He extended his patronage to learned men and established schools and colleges for theological instruction. Several measures were devised by him to promote the welfare of his subjects of all classes, the chief of which were the facilities of irrigation and a hospital at Delhi where medical aid was given free of cost.

Firuz is well known in history for his administrative reform, but he had nothing of the ability, intrepidity, and vigour of Alauddin Khilji or Muhammad Tughluq. He was a weak-minded man who listened too much to the advice of *muftis* and *maulvis*. The results of this policy were seen after a generation in the complete disintegration of the Sultanate of Delhi.

The first expedition to Bengal, 1353-54 A.D.

During the confusion that followed the death of Muhammad Tughluq, Bengal completely separated itself from Delhi, and Haji Ilyās proclaimed himself an independent ruler under the title of Shams-ud-din. The Sultan marched towards Bengal at the head of a large army, and on reaching there issued a proclamation to his Bengali subjects, in which he explained the wrongs of Haji Ilyās and his own desire to do justice to the people and to govern the country well.

When Haji Ilyās heard of his approach he entrenched himself in the fort of Iqdalā. To induce him to leave the fortress Firuz had recourse to a clever strategical move; he retraced his steps a few miles backwards in the hope that the enemy would come out of the fort in order to harass the retreating army. The expected happened, and Shams-ud-din followed the royal army at the head of a considerable force consisting of 10,000 horse and 20,000 foot, all eager to fight against the Delhwis. The Sultan arranged his troops in battle array according to the time-honoured practice of mediæval warfare in three divisions—the right, left and centre, and himself took an active part in organising the campaign. A terrible battle ensued in which the protagonists on either side

fought with great valour and determination. When Shams-ud-din saw the day going against him, he fled from the field of battle and took shelter again in the fort of Iqdalā. The royalists followed up their success and invested the fort in full vigour. But the shrieks and wails of women who pathetically demonstrated their grief, moved the compassionate heart of the Sultan, and he forthwith decided to abandon the fruits of a hard-earned victory. This is how the official historian of the reign describes Firuz's incapacity to deal with a difficult situation: "To storm the fort, put more Musalmans to the sword, and expose honourable women to ignominy, would be a crime for which he could not answer on the day of judgment, and which would leave no difference between him and the Mughals." Tatar Khan, the imperial commandant, urged the annexation of the province, but with his characteristic weakness Firuz rejected his advice on the plea that Bengal was a land of swamps, and that it was not worth while to retain possession of it.

On his return from Bengal, the Sultan devoted himself with great energy and vigour to the organisation of his administration.

The second expedition, 1359-60 A.D.

But a second expedition to Bengal became necessary, when Zafar Khan, the son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din, the first independent ruler of Bengal, complained of the high-handedness of Shams-ud-din and begged the Sultan to intercede on his behalf. Zafar Khan was well received at court, and his heart was elated with joy when the Sultan ordered the Khan-i-Jahan to make preparations for a second expedition to Bengal. Popular enthusiasm rose to such a high pitch that numerous volunteers enrolled themselves in the army which consisted of 70,000 horse, innumerable foot, 470 elephants and a large flotilla of boats. Shams-ud-din had been dead for some time and his son Sikandar had succeeded him. Following the example of his father, he shut himself up in the fort of Iqdalā. The fortress

was besieged, and the royalists made breaches in its walls, which were soon repaired by the Bengalis who displayed great courage and vigour. But the patience of both sides was soon exhausted by this interminable siege, and negotiations for peace began. Sikandar's envoy conducted the negotiations with great patience, tact and firmness. He agreed to the restoration of Sonārgāon to Zafar Khan and sent 40 elephants and valuable presents to the Sultan to cement their friendship. But Zafar Khan who was the chief cause of all this trouble gave up the idea of retiring to his country and preferred to remain at Delhi. Once again Firuz's weakness prevented him from asserting his sovereignty over a province which was well-nigh wthin his grasp.

The subjugation of the Rai of Jagnagar.

On his return from Bengal, the Sultan halted at Jaunpur, from where he marched against Jajnagar (roughly modern Orissa), which was in a flourishing condition. The Rai of Jajnagar fled at the approach of the royal army and took shelter in an island, whither he was pursued by the Sultan's forces. The temple of Jagannath at Puri was desecrated and the idols were thrown into the sea. At last, dismayed by the heavy odds arrayed against him, he sent his emissaries to negotiate the terms of peace. To their utter surprise, the Sultan informed them that he was entirely ignorant of the cause of their master's flight. The Rai explained his conduct and agreed to furnish a fixed number of elephants every year as tribute. The Sultan accepted these terms, and having obtained the submission of several other Hindu chieftains and Zamindars on his way, he returned to the capital.

Conquest of Nagarkot, 1360-61 A.D.

The fortress of Nagarkot had been conquered by Muhammad Tughluq in 1337, but during the latter part of his reign its Rai had established himself as an independent ruler. The temple of Jawalamukhi in Nagarkot was an old and venerated shrine which was visited by thousands of Hindu

pilgrims who made rich offerings to the idol. Its sanctity was an additional reason which led the bigoted Firuz to undertake this expedition ; and the contemporary chronicler writes that when the Sultan paid a visit to the temple, he addressed the assembled Rais, Ranas, and Zamindars in these words: "Of what avail is the worship of this stone? What desire of yours will be fulfilled by praying to it? It is declared in our Holy Law that those who act contrary to it will go to hell." The fort of Nagarkot was besieged and *manjnīqs* and *arradas* were placed on all sides. After a protracted siege of six months, which well-nigh exhausted the patience of the combatants on both sides, Firuz offered pardon to the Rai, who "came down from his fort, apologised, and threw himself at the feet of the Sultan, who placed his hand on his back, bestowed upon him rich robes of honour and sent him back to his fort."

The conquest of Thatta, 1371-72 A.D.

The Thatta expedition is one of the most interesting episodes in the reign of Firuz Tughluq. It originated in a desire to avenge the wrongs done by the people of Thatta to the late Sultan. Preparations for the campaign were made, and volunteers were enrolled in the army which consisted of 90,000 cavalry, numerous infantry and 480 elephants. A large flotilla of five thousand boats was also constructed and placed under experienced admirals. Jam Babiniya, the chieftain of Sindh, arranged in battle array his forces which numbered 200,000 horse and 40,000 foot, and prepared for action. Meanwhile in the Sultan's camp provisions became scarce owing to famine and pestilence, which decimated the troops and swept away nearly one-fourth of the cavalry.

Reduced to sore straits, the Sultan retreated towards Gujarat and lost his way in the Ran of Kutch. Having reached Gujarat, he organised his army and spent about two crores in

obtaining the sinews of war. The royal army was further strengthened by the reinforcements sent by the Khan-i-Jahan from Delhi. The Sindhians were frightened and expressed their willingness to surrender. The Jam offered submission; he was taken to Delhi where a liberal pension was granted to him and his brother was reinstated in the Jamship.

Civil administration.

Firuz revived the Jagīr system which had been discontinued by Alauddin. The whole empire was divided into fiefs and the fiefs into districts held by his officers. In addition to these grants of land, the officers of the state were given allowances which enabled them to accumulate large fortunes. The interests of the agriculturists were well protected. The Sultan constructed four canals which irrigated large areas of land and levied a small irrigation cess which amounted to 10 per cent of the produce of the fields. The system of taxation was reorganised and made to conform to the law of Islam. All vexatious taxes were abolished and Firuz in his *Fatuhat i-Firuzshahi* takes credit for abolishing 23 such taxes. He levied only four taxes allowed by the Holy Law, namely, the *Khiraj*, *Zakat*, *Jeziya* and *Khams*. The spoils of war and conquest won by the arms of the faithful were to be shared by the army and the state in the proportion laid down in the sacred law. The new policy of taxation had a beneficial effect on the development of trade and agriculture. Prices were low, and no scarcity of necessaries was ever felt.

In administering law and justice Firuz acted like an orthodox Muslim. He followed the Quran with the strictest fidelity. The *mufti* expounded the law and the Qazi delivered the judgment. The legal system was reformed. Torture was abolished, and leniency was shown in awarding punishments to wrong-doers.

The Sultan was kindly disposed towards the poor and the unemployed. The Kotwals made lists of those who were in want

and forwarded them to the *Diwan* where suitable occupations were provided for them.

Himself acquainted with the science of medicine, the Sultan established a hospital (*Dar-ul-Shafā*) at Delhi where medicines were distributed to the sick free of cost. The patients were supplied with food at the expense of the state, and competent physicians were appointed to look after them.

The military organisation of the empire rested on a feudal basis. Grants of land were made to the soldiers of the army for their maintenance while the irregulars (*ghairwajh*) were paid from the royal treasury, and those who received neither salary nor grants of land were given assignments upon the revenue. The royal army consisted of 80 or 90 thousand clavalry in addition to the retainers of the feudal barons and grandees of the state, who numbered a little less than two hundred thousand. Horsemen were required to bring the right kind of animals to the registration office, and the corrupt practices that had formerly attended this business were put an end to by the vigilant Malik Razi, the *Nāib Arīz-i-mamālik* (deputy muster-master). The soldiers were treated kindly and were provided with all sorts of comforts. But the Sultan's misplaced generosity seriously impaired the efficiency of the army by allowing aged and infirm persons, no longer fit for active service, to remain in it. A new regulation laid down that when a soldier became unfit on account of old age, his son, or son-in-law, or slave should succeed him, and in this way "the veterans were to remain at home in ease and the young were to ride forth in their strength."

The Army.

One of the principal features of the reign of Firuz was the unusual growth of the slave system. From the various parts of the empire slaves were sent by viceroys and were granted allowances by the state. Owing to the Sultan's favour the number of slaves rapidly multiplied, so that in a few years in the metropolis and

The slave system.

the provinces of the empire their total number reached the high figure of 180,000. For the proper management of this army of slaves, a separate department with a regular staff of officers was established, which must have caused a heavy drain upon the treasury.

Works of public utility.

Firuz was a great builder. He founded the towns of Firuzabad, Fatahabad, Jaunpur and several others; built mosques, palaces, monasteries and inns for the convenience of travellers, and repaired numerous buildings which had suffered from the ravages of time. Numerous artisans were employed by the state, and a qualified superintendent was appointed to supervise the work of each class of artisans. The plan of every new building was examined in the finance office (*Diwan-i-Wizarat*) and then money was sanctioned for its construction.

The Sultan was a great gardener. He rebuilt 30 old gardens of Alauddin and laid out 1,200 new ones in the vicnity of Delhi. Numerous gardens and orchards were laid out which yielded to the state a large revenue. Much waste land was reclaimed, and though the extent of the empire was reduced, its revenue increased by several millions.

Firuz took interest in the preservation of ancient monuments, and caused two monoliths of Aśoka to be removed to his new city. Learned Brahmans were called to decipher the inscriptions on the pillars, but they failed to make out the script which was totally different from the language with which they were familiar. Some of them tried to please the Sultan by saying that it was recorded in the inscriptions that no one would be able to remove the monoliths until the advent of Firuz.

Promotion of learning.

Though not a finished scholar like his cousin Muhammad Tughluq, the Sultan was interested in the promotion of learning. He extended his patronage to Shaikhs and learned men and accorded to them a most hearty reception in his Palace of Grapes. He

granted pensions and gratuities to them and made it a part of his state policy to encourage learned men in all parts of the empire. He was fond of history, and the works of Zia Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif, besides other works on law and theology, were written during his reign. Numerous colleges and monasteries were established, where men devoted themselves to study and meditation, and to each college was attached a mosque for worship.

The *Māsir-i-Rahimi* of Abdul Baqi Nahāwandi states that he built fifty *Madrasas*. Nizamuddin and Firishta estimate the number to be thirty. Firuz speaks of such institutions in his *Fatūhāt*. The Firuzshahi *Madrasa* at Firuzabad was liberally endowed and surpassed in scholastic attainments the other *Madrasas* of the time. The Sultan caused several works to be translated from Sanskrit into Persian. One of these was the *Dalayal-i-Firuzshahi* which was seized during the conquest of Nagarkot.

Khan-i-Jahan Maqbūl.

No account of Firuz's reign would be complete without a mention of his able and energetic minister Khan-i-Jahan Maqbūl. He was originally a Hindu of Telingana, but had latterly embraced Islam. He had acquired much valuable experience of public affairs under Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, who had entrusted to him the fief of Multan. When Firuz ascended the throne, Maqbūl was elevated to the position of the first minister of the realm after the fall of Ahmad bin Ayaz. When he went on distant expeditions, he left the minister in charge of the capital, and the latter managed the affairs of the state with such ability and vigour that the long absence of the Sultan had no effect upon the administration. Though a great statesman, devoted to the interests of the state, the minister was like most men of rank in his age addicted to the pleasures of the *haram*. It is said, he had two thousand women of different nationalities in his seraglio and a large number of children, who were all

liberally provided for by the state. The Khan-i-Jahan lived up to a ripe old age. When he died in 1370 A.D. his son Jūnā Shah, who was born at Multan during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq, was confirmed in his office, and the title which his father had so long enjoyed was bestowed upon him.

The last days of Firuz were clouded by sorrow and anxiety, and the even tenor of his life was disturbed by the dissensions of parties and factions. The infirmities of age had compelled him to delegate his authority to the minister Khan-i-Jahan, but the latter's overweening pride and insolence filled the old nobility with disgust. In order to put Prince Muhammad out of his way, the minister informed the Sultan that the Prince had entered into a confederacy with certain disaffected nobles and intended to take his life. So skilfully did the wily minister play upon the fears of the weak-minded Firuz that he readily granted him permission to arrest the conspirators. But the Prince proved too clever for him, and by a dexterous move foiled the intrigues of his enemy. Having secured permission for his ladies to visit the royal seraglio, he put on his armour and got into one of the palanquins. When he reached the palace, he threw himself at the feet of his father and begged forgiveness. He was pardoned and the Sultan declared him his heir-apparent. Secure in his position, the Prince spent his time in pleasure and appointed his own unworthy favourites to positions of honour. Opposition to the Prince grew apace, and civil war ensued. The nobles sought the protection of the old Sultan, and his appearance had a magical effect on the hostile troops. The Prince fled towards the Sirmur hills, and order was quickly restored. Firuz once more assumed sovereignty, but advancing age rendered him unfit for the proper discharge of kingly duties. The last public act of his life was the conferment of the royal insignia upon his grandson, Tughluq Shah bin Fatah Khan, to

The last days of Firuz.

whom he delegated his authority. Not long afterwards the old Sultan, who was nearly eighty years old, died in the month of Ramzan, 790 A.H. (October 1388). His death was followed by the scramble of rival princes and parties for power which will be described in the next chapter.

The causes of disintegration.

After the death of Firuz Tughluq the empire of Delhi which had shrunk to the dimensions of a small principality rapidly declined in importance. It had been greatly disturbed by the convulsions of Muḥammad's reign, and Firuz had done nothing to recover the lost provinces. As a result of his policy the centrifugal tendencies, so common in Indian history, began to work, and province after province separated itself from the empire. Ambitious chiefs and disloyal governors hoisted the flag of revolt, and defied the authority of the central power, which had become incapable of asserting itself. The basic principle of the Muslim State in the fourteenth century was force ; but the awe and fear in which the ruling class was held had disappeared owing to the relaxation of authority, and Firuz was loved and not feared by his subjects. The Muslims, accustomed to a life of ease at the court, lost their old vigour and manliness, and behaved like a disorderly rabble in the midst of a campaign. The jagir system led to great abuses, and often the feudatories attempted to set up as independent rulers. The slaves of Firuz whose number had exceeded all reasonable limits were another source of weakness. The whole institution had undergone a radical change, and the slaves, no longer capable and loyal like their forbears in the time of Balban and Alauddin, embroiled themselves in disgraceful intrigues, and added to the disorders of the time. The incompetence of the later Tughluqs led to a recrudescence of Hindu revolts particularly in the Doab, where *Zamindars* and *Khūts* withheld tribute and began to play the rôle of petty despots. The revenue was not realised, and the whole adminis-

tration fell into a state of chaos. A kingdom which depended for its existence mainly on military strength was bound to be pulled to pieces like a child's map, when its destinies were controlled by men who were neither warriors nor statesmen, and who could be utilised by self-seeking adventurers for their own aggrandizement. By their incompetence, the successors of Firuz accelerated the process of disintegration, the seeds of which had been sown during his reign.[12]

The weak successors of Firuz.

The successor of Firuz was his grandson Tughluq Shah, son of Prince Fatah Khan, who assumed the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq II. This young and inexperienced ruler had no idea of the magnitude of the difficulties that surrounded him and the dangers that threatened the empire of Delhi. He gave himself up to debauch and pleasure, and neglected the affairs of the state. His conduct alienated the sympathies of the great officials and Amirs, and when he threw into prison Abu Bakr, son of Zafar Khan, they formed a conspiracy to overthrow him. The conspirators entered the palace, and the Sultan who knew that they had designs on him escaped with the Wazir towards the river. But he was pursued and overtaken by one of the conspirators, just when he was about to cross the river, and was beheaded on the spot on February 19, 1389 A.D. Abu Bakr succeeded him ; gradually he established his hold over

12 Stanley Lane-Poole mentions inter-marriage with the Hindus as one of the causes of disintegration. This is hardly correct. Firuz himself, who was born of a Hindu mother, never showed any Hindu proclivities. On the contrary, he was a bigot, who always deemed it an act of merit to persecute the "infidels." Besides, Lane-Poole's statement is not borne out by subsequent history. The great Mughal Emperor Akbar adopted the policy of matrimonial alliances with a view to strengthen the empire, and this policy succeeded remarkably well. The empire continued as vigorous as before under his two successors, and it broke up only when Aurangzeb abandoned the policy of religious toleration which his great-grandfather had inaugurated.

Delhi, and his influence and authority began to increase from day to day. But the peace of the realm was disturbed by the news of the murder of the Amir of Samana, who had been sent against Prince Muhammad, the younger son of Sultan Firuz Shah. The latter readily grasped at this opportunity, and forthwith proceeded to Samana where he proclaimed himself emperor. Encouraged by the offers of help from some of the Amirs and nobles at the capital, he marched towards Delhi and encamped in its neighbourhood. A terrible civil war became imminent, and ambitious chiefs and slaves began to sway the scale on one side or the other. Bahadur Nahir of Mewat joined Abu Bakr, and with his help the armies of Delhi succeeded in inflicting a defeat upon Prince Muhammad in the battle of Firuzabad. The vanquished prince went into the Doab and began to make efforts to obtain fresh allies. His troops, mortified by their defeat, ravaged the lands of the Doab, and plundered the estates of the nobles and Amirs of Delhi. Sharp skirmishes with the Zamindars and petty chieftains followed and the *lex talionis* was freely resorted to. Abu Bakr's indifference to these depredations turned his nobles against him, and many of them went over to the side of the enemy. Having organised his forces, Muhammad returned to Jalesar, where he encamped and busied himself in making preparations for battle. A battle was fought near Panipat, but fortune again favoured Abu Bakr, and Prince Humayun, Muhammad's son, suffered a severe defeat. Muhammad, who was assisted by a faction at Delhi, did not lose heart, and when Abu Bakr left for Mewat to seek the help of Bahadur Nahir, the disaffected nobles invited him to come to the capital. In response to this invitation Muhammad marched towards Delhi, where he was cordially received by his partisans. Having effected a safe entry into the capital, Prince Muhammad took his abode in the palace, and ascended the throne at Firuzabad under the title of Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad in August 1390. In

order to consolidate his power, the new Sultan deprived the old Firuz Shahi slaves, who were partisans of Abu Bakr, of the custody of elephants. They protested against this step but in vain, and one night they fled with their wives and children to join Abu Bakr. The Sultan sent Prince Humayun and Islam Khan against his rival and the slaves of the old regime. Islam Khan's intrepid action overpowered Abu Bakr, and when the latter saw that his cause was lost, he made his submission. The Sultan pardoned Bahadur Nahir and imprisoned Abu Bakr in the fort of Meerut, where he died afterwards.

The Sultan returned to Delhi, but the good effect of his victory was marred by the rebellion of the Zamindars of the Doab. The revolt of Narasingh, Zamindar of Etawah, was successfully put down, but Islam Khan's treasonable conduct caused the Sultan much anxiety. On the evidence of a kinsman of his own, Islam was condemned to death without a trial. But more formidable in magnitude than all these was the rebellion of Bahadur Nahir of Mewat, who began to make inroads into the environs of Delhi. The Sultan, although in a state of feeble health, proceeded against him, and compelled him to seek refuge in his own fortress. His health declined rapidly, and he died on January 15, 1394. He was succeeded by his son Humayun, but his life was cut short by a "violent disorder," and he died after a few days.

The vacant throne now fell to the lot of Prince Mahmud, the youngest son of Muhammad, who assumed the sceptre under the title of Nāsir-ud-din Mahmud Tughluq. The problems which confronted the new government were difficult and multifarious. At the capital, the scramble of parties and factions made the establishment of a strong administration well-nigh impossible ; abroad, the Hindu chiefs and Muslim governors openly disregarded the authority of the central government. The whole country from Kanauj to Bihar and Bengal was in a state of turmoil, and many of the chiefs and

Zamindars had begun to exercise *de facto* sovereignty within their territorial limits. Khwaja Jahan who had been created *Malik-us-Sharq* (Lord of the East) became independent at Jaunpur ; the Khokhars revolted in the north ; Gujarat declared its independence, and Malwa and Khandesh followed suit. The government found it impossible to arrest the forces of disorder which was aggravated by the acrimonious disputes of contending parties at Delhi. Some of the nobles put forward Nusrat Khan, a grandson of Firuz Tughluq, as a rival claimant to the throne. The Amirs and Maliks at Firuzabad, together with the slaves of the old regime, espoused the cause of Nusrat, while those at Delhi gave their support to Mahmud Tughluq. Thus, there were two Sultans arrayed in hostile camps, and the imperial crown was tossed to and fro like a shuttlecock between the contending factions. A large number of party leaders arose, but the most distinguished among them were Bahadur Nahir, Mallu Iqbal, and Muqarrab Khan. Fighting went on ceaselessly ; and the protagonists on either side keenly contested for supremacy without any appreciable result. The provincial governors took no part in these civil wars; but they vigilantly watched the fluctuations in the fortunes of rival parties. Towards the close of the year 1397, came the news that the army of Timur had crossed the Indus and laid siege to Uchha. The effect of the advent of a foreign army was soon felt at the capital, where the parties began to shift their positions with astonishing rapidity. Mallu Iqbal went over to the side of Nusrat Khan, and the new allies swore fealty to each other, but the compact was too hastily formed to last long. Sultan Mahmud and his powerful allies, Muqarrab Khan and Bahadur Nahir, occupied old Delhi. Mallu Iqbal treacherously attacked Nusrat, but the prince having got scent of his treasonable designs escaped to Tatar Khan at Panipat. Mallu Iqbal now turned against his irreconcilable foe, Muqarrab, and determined to drive him out of the capital. A fierce fight raged between them, and

it was after two months that a peace was patched up through the intervention of some noblemen. But Mallu was not the man to abide by his plighted word; he attacked Muqarrab at his residence and had him cruelly put to death. Muqarrab's death broke, as it were, the right arm of Sultan Mahmūd, who, deprived of all royal authority, became a tool in the hands of Mallu Iqbal. He made efforts to reorganise the administration, but the grim spectre of a foreign invasion stared him in the face. The ominous news flashed forth that Amir Timur was advancing upon Hindustan with his myriad hosts.

Timur's invasion, 1398 A.D.

Timur was born in 1335 A.D. at Kesh in Transoxiana, fifty miles south of Samarqand. He was the son of Amir Turghay, chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlās, a noble Turkish tribe, and a nephew of Hāji Barlās. At the age of 33 he became the head of the Chaghtāī Turks and constantly waged war against Persia and the adjoining lands. Having made himself master of the countries of central Asia, he resolved on the invasion of Hindustan which was at the time in a state of anarchy. His motive in doing so was 'to purify the land itself from the filth of infidelity and polytheism.'

The advance guard of Timur's army under Pir Muhammad soon reached India, crossed the Indus, captured Uchha, and then advanced upon Multan, which also capitulated after a protracted siege of six months. Having collected a large army from all parts of his wide dominions, Timur marched across the Hindu-Kush and crossed the river Indus on September 24, 1398. When he reached the neighbourhood of Dipalpur, the people who had murdered Musāfir Qābuli whom Pir Muhammad had appointed governor of their city, fled out of fear and took refuge in the fort of Bhatnir, which was one of the most renowned fortresses in Hindustan. The generals of Timur attacked the fort on the right and left and captured it. The Rai submitted, but the Amir inflicted heavy punishments upon the inhabitants of

Bhatnir. Men and women were slain; their goods were forcibly seized, and the buildings and the fort were razed to the ground.

From Bhatnir Timur marched to Sirsuti which was easily conquered, and when he reached Kaithal which is at a distance of 34 miles from Samānā, he began to make preparations for an attack upon Delhi. As the army progressed in its journey, the inhabitants of the towns through which it passed fled in panic, leaving their houses and goods at the disposal of the invaders. Town after town surrendered, and in a short time Timur reached the Jahanuma, a fine palace built by Firuz Shah at a distance of six miles from Delhi. The neighbouring country was ravaged, and the soldiers were permitted to obtain food and fodder for themselves and their cattle by means of plunder. When Timur reached near Delhi, he ordered that the 100,000 Hindus who were in his camp should be put to death, for he thought that on the great day of battle, they might 'break their bonds' and go over to the enemy. Even such a pious man as Maulana Nasir-ud-din Omar, who had never killed a sparrow in his life slew 15 Hindus who happened to be his prisoners.

Timur organised his forces in battle array and made ready for action. Sultan Mahmūd and Mallu Iqbāl collected an army, which contained 10,000 well-trained horse, 40,000 foot and 125 elephants. The two armies confronted each other outside Delhi. In the battle that followed, the Delhi army fought with desperate courage, but it was defeated. Mahmūd and Mallu Iqbāl fled from the field of battle, and Timur hoisted his flag on the ramparts of Delhi. The city was thoroughly sacked, and the inhabitants were massacred. According to the *Zafarnama* men and women were made slaves, and vast booty fell into the hands of the enemy. Several thousand craftsmen and mechanics were brought out of the city and were divided among the Princes, Amirs, and Āghās, who had assisted in the conquest.

Timur halted at Delhi for a fortnight which he spent in pleasure and enjoyment. After that he moved towards Meerut, and then proceeded to Hardwar where a fierce fight raged between the Hindus and Muslims. This was followed by a successful raid in the Siwalik hills. The Rai was defeated, and vast booty fell into the hands of the victors.

Having completed the conquest of the Siwalik country, Timur marched towards Jammu. The Raja was defeated, taken prisoner and forced to embrace Islam.

The task of conquest was now over. Timur felt that it was time to go. Having entrusted the fiefs of Lahore, Multan and Dipalpur to Khizr Khan, he left for Samarqand.

Effects of Timur's invasion.

Timur's invasion caused widespread anarchy in Hindustan. The government at Delhi was completely paralysed, and in the vicinity of the capital as well as in the provinces of the empire, the greatest confusion prevailed. To the sufferings consequent upon a war, conducted by heartless ruffians, fired by a fanatical thirst for bloodshed and plunder, were added the horrors of famine and pestilence, which destroyed men and cattle, and caused a suspension of agriculture. The dislocation of the entire social system, coupled with the abeyance of political authority capable of enforcing peace and order, favoured the plans of the military adventurers, who harried the land and harassed the people for their own aggrandisement. The small military cliques, working for their own selfish ends, became the chief curse of the time. In March 1399, Sultan Nusrat Shah, who had fled into the Doab, recovered possession of Delhi, but it soon passed into the hands of Iqbal Khan, whose sway extended over a few districts in the Doab and the fiefs in the neighbourhood of the capital.[13] Iqbal gradually

13 The rest of the empire was parcelled out into fiefs which were independent.

asserted his authority, and in 1401 he was joined by Sultan Mahmūd, whom he formally received in the capital. But as real power was in the hands of Iqbal, Sultan Mahmūd chafed against the restraint imposed upon him, and sought in vain the help of Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur. Thus foiled in his efforts to effect a coalition against Iqbāl, the Sultan settled at Kanauj, where the disbanded troops and retainers rallied round his banner. Iqbāl marched towards Gwalior to chastise the local ruler Bhima Deva, but he was obliged to raise the siege and return to Delhi. His expedition against the Hindu chiefs of Etawah was more successful; but when he marched towards Multan, Khizr Khan, the governor, opposed him, and in a battle that ensued Iqbāl was slain in 1405. The death of Iqbāl removed from the path of Mahmūd a formidable opponent, and on being invited by Daulat Khan and other nobles, he proceeded to Delhi, but the imbecility of his character soon made him unpopular with the army, and prevented him from making a proper use of his restored rights. The author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* who has carefully chronicled the events of this troubled period, writes: "The

Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, Elliot, IV, p. 37.

The following were the principal fiefs of the empire:—

Delhi and the Doab	Iqbal Khan.
Gujarat with all its districts and dependencies	Zafar Khan Wajīh-ul-Mulk.
Multan, Dipalpur and parts of Sindh ...	Khizr Khan.
Mahoba and Kalpi	Mahmud Khan.
Kanauj, Oudh, Kara, Dalmau, Sandila, Bahraich, Bihar and Jaunpur ...	Khwaja Jahan.
Dhar	Dilawar Khan.
Samana	Ghalib Khan.
Biyana	Shams Khan.

whole business was fallen into the greatest disorder. The Sultan gave no heed to the duties of his station, and had no care for the permanency of the throne ; his whole time was devoted to pleasure and debauchery."

Sultan Mahmūd died in 1412, and with him, as Firishta writes, fell the kingdom of Delhi from the race of the Turks, who had mightily swayed the sceptre for more than two centuries. After his death the Amirs and Maliks chose Daulat Khan as their leader and gave him their adhesion. Daulat Khan received no honours of royalty ; he occupied only the position of the head of a military oligarchy, which was trying to save itself from a highly difficult situation. Shortly after his assumption of this quasi-royal office, Daulat Khan led an expedition to Katehar and received the submission of the Hindu chiefs. At this time came the disquieting news that Ibrahim of Jaunpur was besieging Qadr Khan in his fortress at Kalpi, but Daulat Khan had no forces at his command to march to his relief. Meanwhile Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan and Timur's deputy in Hindustan, who had been watching the disordered state of things, advanced upon Delhi, and after a siege of four months compelled Daulat Khan to surrender on May 23, 1414. Fortune befriended Khizr Khan ; he easily acquired possession of Delhi and laid the foundations of a new dynasty.

CHAPTER VIII

BREAK-UP OF THE EMPIRE

(i) The Rise of Provincial Dynasties

In the tenth century the kingdom of Malwa fell into the hands of the Parmar Rajputs, and under their rule it attained to great prominence. During the reign of Raja Bhoja of Dhārā, Malwa became very famous. In 1235 Īltutmish raided Ujjain and demolished the famous temple of Mahākāli. Alauddin conquered it in 1310, and from that time it continued to be held by Muslim governors until the break-up of the kingdom of Delhi after the death of Firuz Tughluq. In 1401 Dilāwar Khan, a descendant of Muhammad Ghori and one of the fief-holders of Firuz Tughluq, established his independence during the period of confusion that followed the invasion of Timur and made Dhār the capital of his kingdom.[1] Dilāwar was succeeded by his son, Alap Khan, under the title of Hushang Shah (1405—1434 A.D.), who transferred his capital to Mandu, which he adorned with many beautiful buildings. The situation of Malwa and the fertility of its lands involved it in wars with the neighbouring kingdoms of Delhi, Jaunpur, and Gujarat, which greatly taxed her resources. Hushang was defeated in a war with Gujarat and was taken prisoner, but he was soon liberated and restored to his kingdom. He was succeeded by his son Ghazni Khan, a worthless debauchee, who was murdered by his minister Mahmud Khan,[2] a Khilji Turk, who usurped the throne and assumed the honours of royalty. Under Mahmud

Malwa.

[1] Firishta has given a connected account of the kings of Malwa. See Briggs, IV, pp. 167—279.

[2] Mahmud Khilji was the son of Malik Mughis Khilji. Both father and son acted as ministers to Hushang. Hushang's son, Ghazni Khan,

Khilji (1436—69 A.D.) Malwa rose to be a powerful and prosperous kingdom and its ruler established his fame as a great general and warrior all over Hindustan, by his unending wars against the rulers of Rajputana, Gujarat, and the Sultans of the Bahmani dynasty. Mahmud was a brave soldier ; his fondness for war was so great that his whole life was spent in the military camp. As an administrator he was just and generous, and Firishta writes of him : "Sultan Mahmud was polite, brave, just, and learned ; and during his reign, his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy, and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other. Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field so that his tent became his home, and the field of battle, his resting place. His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the earth read."

Mahmud Khilji greatly enlarged his dominion, which extended in the south to the Satpura range, in the west to the frontier of Gujarat, on the east to Bundelkhand, and on the north to Mewar and Herauti. In 1440 the ambitious Sultan proceeded against Delhi, which was in a state of decline, but Bahlol Lodi successfully resisted his advance. His war with Rana Kumbha of Chittor about the same time was indecisive. Both sides claimed the victory. The Rana commemorated his triumph by building the "Tower of Victory" at Chittor, while the Khilji war-lord erected a seven-storied tower at Mandu as a monument of his success.

Mahmud was succeeded by his son Ghiyās-ud-din in 1469 who was poisoned to death by his son Nāsir-ud-din, who ascended the throne in 1500. Nāsir-ud-din's murder of his

who assumed the title of Muhammad Ghori, was married to the sister of Mahmud Khilji. Being a debauchee and a drunkard, he left the business of the state entirely in the hands of Mahmud Khilji, which ambitioned him to imprison his royal patron. (Briggs, IV, pp. 186, 191, 193, Elliot, IV, pp. 552—54.)

father does not seem to have shocked Muslim sentiment at the time it was committed, but nearly a century later it received a most scathing condemnation from Jahangir, who ordered the ashes of the parricide to be cast into the fire.

Nāsir-ud-din turned out a miserable sensualist and a brutal tyrant, and Jahangir's informant told him, when he visited the place in 1617, that there were 15,000 women in his *haram*, accomplished in all arts and crafts, and that whenever he heard of a beautiful virgin, he would not desist until he obtained possession of her. In a fit of drunkenness, when he fell into the Kaliyadaha lake, none of his attendants had the courage to pull him out, for he had mercilessly punished them for similar service on a previous occasion, and he was left to be drowned. He was succeeded in 1510 by Mahmud II, who called in the Rajputs to curb the turbulence of the Muslim oligarchy which had become powerful in the state. He appointed a Rajput nobleman, Medini Rao, to the office of minister with the result that Rajput influence became predominant at his court. Distrustful of the motives of his powerful minister, he called in the aid of Muzaffar Shah, king of Gujarat, to expel him and re-establish his power. A believer in the efficacy of the sword, Mahmud came into conflict with Rana Sanga, the redoubtable ruler of Mewar, who captured him, but with the magnanimity of a Rajput released him afterwards and restored him to his kingdom. The unwise Sultan, who ill-appreciated this act of generosity, again led an attack upon the Rana's successor, but he was captured by his ally, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, who defeated and executed him. All the male members of the royal house were put to death, the sole survivor being one who was at Humayun's court. The Kingdom of Malwa was annexed to Gujarat in 1531, and continued to be a part of it until it was conquered by Humayun. Humayun expelled Bahādur Shah from Malwa in 1535 and defeated him at Mandāsor and Mandu. When the

sovereignty of Delhi passed into the hands of Sher Shah, he entrusted the province to one of his co-adjutors, Shujaat Khan, who was succeeded on his death by his son, Malik Bāyāzīd, known as Baz Bahadur, so famous in folk-lore and legend by reason of his passionate attachment to the beautiful and accomplished princess, Rūpmati of Sarangpur. In 1562 the conquest of Malwa was effected with terrible cruelty by Akbar's generals, Adam Khan and Pir Muhammad, and it was annexed to the Mughal empire. Baz Bahadur, after a futile struggle, acknowledged Akbar as his suzerain, and received the command of 2,000 horse as a mark of royal favour.

Gujarat.

The province of Gujarat was one of the most fertile and wealthy provinces of India, and had always attracted the attention of foreign invaders. Mahmud of Ghazni was the first Muslim invader, whose famous raid upon the temple of Somnath was the prelude to further Muslim invasions. But the permanent conquest of Gujarat was not attempted till the reign of Alauddin Khilji who annexed it to the Sultanate of Delhi in 1297. The province was henceforward held by Muslim governors who were subordinate to the rulers of Delhi, but whose loyalty fluctuated according to the strength or weakness of the central government. After the invasion of Timur, when the affairs of the Delhi kingdom fell into confusion, Zafar Khan, the governor, assumed the position of an independent prince in 1401, and formally withdrew his allegiance. His son Tatar Khan conspired with some of the discontented nobles to get rid of his father, who was an obstacle to his assumption of royal dignity. He threw him into confinement, and assumed royal honours under the title of Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad Shah in 1403. But this glory was short-lived, for he was soon afterwards poisoned by Shams Khan, one of his father's confidants. Zafar Khan was brought from Āsāwal, and with the consent of the nobles and officers of the army, he assumed the honours of

royalty under the title of Muzaffar Shah. He subdued Dhār and undertook several other expeditions to consolidate his power. But four years later, he was poisoned by his grandson Ahmad Shah who was anxious to usurp the throne for himself.

He was the true founder of the independence of Gujarat. A brave and warlike prince, he spent his whole life in waging wars and conquering territories to enlarge the boundaries of his small kingdom. In the first year of his reign, he built the city of Ahmadabad on the left bank of the Sabarmati river near the old town of Āsāwal, and adorned it with beautiful buildings, and invited artisans, and merchants to settle there. He was an orthodox Muslim, who waged wars against the Hindus, destroyed their temples, and forced them to embrace Islam. In 1414 he marched against Girnar and defeated the Rai who offered submission. He led an attack upon Malwa in 1421 and laid siege to Mandu. Hushang whose army was defeated in two skirmishes secured his pardon by promising fealty in the future. The last notable expedition was undertaken by the Sultan in 1437 to assist Prince Masud Khan, grandson of Hushang of Malwa, who had fled from the tyranny of Mahmud Khilji, the murderer of his father and the usurper of his ancestral dominions. Mandu was besieged, and the usurper Mahmud Khilji was defeated in a hotly contested engagement. But the sudden outbreak of a severe epidemic spoiled the fruits of victory, and the Sultan was obliged to beat a hasty retreat towards Ahmadabad where he breathed his last in 1441.

Ahmad Shah, 1411—1441.

Ahmad Shah was a brave and warlike prince ; he was a zealous champion of the faith. As long as he lived, he practised the observances of Islam, and looked upon war against the Hindus as a religious duty. His love of justice was unequalled. The claims of birth, rank, or kinship were nothing in his eyes, and on one occasion, he had his son-in-law

publicly executed in the bazar in circumstances of exceptional barbarity for the murder of an innocent person. The author of the *Mirat-i-Sikandari* justly observes that the "effect of this exemplary punishment lasted from the beginning to the end of the Sultan's reign, and no noble or soldier was concerned in murder."

Ahmad Shah was succeeded by his son Muhammad Shah who was styled as "Zar bakhsha" or "bestower of gold." He marched against Champanir, but the Raja called in the aid of the ruler of Malwa, and the combined armies of Malwa and Champanir put him to flight. His nobles conspired against him and caused his death by poison in 1451. His son Qutb-ud-din, who was placed upon the throne, spent a large part of his time in expeditions against the Rana of Chittor. After a short reign of eight years and a half, he died in 1459, and was succeeded by his uncle Daud, a notorious profligate, who by his meanness of character so offended the nobles that within a week of his accession to the throne they deposed him and installed in his place Fatah Khan, a grandson of Ahmad Shah, under the title of Mahmud, commonly known as Mahmud Bīgarha, in 1458 A.D.

Mahmud Bīgarha may rightly be called the greatest of the Gujarat kings. The author of the *Mirat-i-Sikandari* gives a highly amusing account of his habits in these words :—

Mahmud Bīgarha, 1458—1511.

"Notwithstanding his high dignity and royalty, he had an enormous appetite. The full daily allowance of food for the Sultan was one *man* of Gujarat weight. In eating this he put aside five *sirs* of boiled rice, and before going to sleep he used to make it up into a pasty and place one-half of it on the right-hand side of his couch and the other half on the left, so that on whichever side he awoke he might find something to eat, and might then go to sleep

again. In the morning after saying his prayers, he took a cup full of honey and a cup of butter with a hundred or a hundred and fifty golden plantains. He often used to say, 'If God had not raised Mahmud to the throne of Gujarat, who would have satisfied his hunger.' "

Mahmud was a brave and warlike prince. He rescued Nizam Shah Bahmani from Mahmud Khilji of Malwa and compelled the Rai of Junagarh to acknowledge his authority. He suppressed the pirates who infested the sea-coast of Gujarat, and secured the submission of the Hindu chief. The Rajputs of Champanir were the next to submit, and the fort was surrendered to the Muslims in 1484. Mahmud built a wall round the town of Champanir in commemoration of his victory, and renamed it Muhammadabad.

War with the Portuguese.

Towards the close of his reign in 1507 he led an expedition against the Portuguese, who had securely established themselves on the Western Coast, and cut off the trade of the Muslims. He allied himself with the Sultan of Turkey, who with a view to put an end to the Portuguese interference with overland trade fitted out a fleet of twelve ships, and despatched 15,000 men, commanded by Mir Hozem, to attack their possessions in India. The Portuguese at last obtained a victory which established their power on the sea-coast and gave them an undisputed command of the sea-borne trade.

After a glorious reign of 52 years the Sultan died in 1511. He was a great monarch ; his personal habits became known even in Europe. As long as he lived, he ruled with great ability and vigour, and the Muslim chronicler speaks of his reign in these words :—

" He added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat, and was the best of all the Gujarat kings, including

all who preceded, and all who succeeded him ; and whether for abounding justice and generosity ; for success in religious war, and for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans ; for soundness of judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age ; for power, for valour, and victory—he was a pattern of excellence."

The next ruler of importance was Bahadur Shah who came to the throne in 1526 A.D. He was a brave and warlike ruler.

Bahadur Shah, 1526—1537 A.D.

Soon after his accession he entered upon a brilliant career of conquest and annexation. He captured Mandu and Chanderi and stormed the fort of Chittor in 1534. Bahadur's ambition alarmed Humayun who marched against him, captured Mandu and Champanir, and occupied Gujarat. But Bahadur who was a capable military leader soon collected a large force, and with its help defeated the imperialists, and recovered Gujarat. His attempt to expel the Portuguese from the island of Diu met with failure. They conspired against him and had him barbarously murdered on board ship when he was barely 31 years of age. After Bahadur's death Gujarat fell into a state of anarchy and disorder. Rival factions set up puppet kings who followed one another in rapid succession. Such disorders continued until the annexation of the province to the Mughal empire by Akbar in 1572.

When Firuz undertook his second expedition against Sikandar Shah of Bengal in 1359-60 A.D., he was obliged to

Jaunpur.

halt at Zafrabad[3] during the rains. It was there that he conceived the idea of founding

[3] Zafrabad was an old town. The inscription on the gate of the palace of Hazarat-i-Chirgah-i-Hind shows that the name was known in 721 A.H. in the time of Ghiyās-ud-din Tughluq, king of Delhi. It is a mistake to think that the town was founded by Prince Zafar, governor of Firuz Tughluq, in 1360 A.D.

a town in the neighbourhood which might serve as a *point d' appui* for his military operations in Bengal. On the bank of the river Gumti he caused a new town to be built, which was named Jaunpur to commemorate the name of his illustrious cousin, Muhammad Jūnā, and spared no pains to make it beautiful and attractive. After the death of Firuz in 1388, nothing of importance occurred in the ḫistory of Jaunpur until the rise to power of Khwājā Jahān in the reign of Muhammad. Khwājā Jahān, whose real name was Sarwar, was a eunuch, who had attained to high position by sheer dint of merit. The title of Khwājā Jahān was conferred upon him in 1389, and he was elevated to the rank of Wazir. A little later, when the affairs of the fiefs of Hindustan fell into confusion through the turbulence of the "base infidels," Khwājā Jahān received from Mahmūd Tughluq in 1394 the title of "Malik-us-sharq" or lord of the east, and the administration of all Hindustan from Kanauj to Bihar was entrusted to him. Forthwith, the new governor marched into the interior of the Doab, and suppressing the rebellions in Etawah, Kol, and Kanauj, proceeded to Jaunpur to assume charge of his office. In a short time he brought under his sway the fiefs of Kanauj, Kara, Oudh, Sandila, Dalmau, Bahraich, Bihar, and Tirhut, and subdued the refractory Hindu chieftains. So great was his power that the Rai of Jajnagar and the ruler of Lakhnauti acknowledged his authority, and sent him the number of elephants which they had formerly sent as tribute to Delhi. The confusion and anarchy caused by Timur's invasion favoured the Khwājā's ambitious plans. He

The last line of the inscription runs thus: "As the city was acquired by conquest and re-peopled, it was given the name of Zafrabad."

Fasih-ud-din, "The Sharqi Monuments of Jaunpur," p. 105 (Inscription No. 1).

Also see Führer's note on Zafrabad in "The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur," pp. 64—66.

declared himself independent and assumed the title of Atabak-i-Āzam.

The most remarkable ruler of Jaunpur was Ibrahim, a man of versatile talents, who called himself Shams-ud-din Ibrahim Shah Sharqi. Mahmūd Tughluq who was a puppet in the hands of Iqbal Khan wished to escape from the latter's galling tutelage. While Iqbal was encamped at Kanauj, Mahmūd effected his escape under the pretext of going on a hunting excursion, approached Ibrahim, and solicited his aid against Iqbal. But Ibrahim made no response to his appeal. Thus disappointed and humiliated, Mahmūd returned to the Delhi army, and quietly took possession of Kanauj. Iqbal Khan made an attempt to recover the place but Mahmūd offered successful resistance in 1405.

Iqbal's unexpected death in a battle against Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan, left the field clear for Mahmūd, and some of the Amirs at Delhi invited him to take charge of government. Ibrahim judged it a favourable opportunity to recover his lost fief of Kanauj, but he was opposed by the Delhi army, and withdrew to Jaunpur. Mahmud returned to Delhi, but no sooner was his back turned than Ibrahim mobilised his forces, and captured Kanauj after a siege of four months. Success emboldened him to carry his inroads into the Delhi territory in 1407, but the news of the advance of Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat, who had overpowered the ruler of Dhār, compelled him to abandon the conquered districts of Sambhal and Bulandshahar and to return to Jaunpur. Soon afterwards Ibrahim marched against Qadr Khan of Kalpi, but he had to abandon the siege. Meanwhile a great change was brought about in Delhi politics by Khizr Khan's elevation to the throne on May 23, 1414.

Ibrahim was a great lover of art and letters. He extended his patronage to eminent scholars who made Jaunpur a famous seat of learning in the east. The insecurity of life which

followed the invasion of Timur drove many distinguished literary men to his court, the most widely known of whom was Shihāb-ul-din Malik-ul-'ulamā, who dedicated several of his works to his generous patron. The long interval of peace enabled the Sultan to construct beautiful buildings to adorn his capital. The Atālā mosque was finished in 1408, which stands to this day as a monument of Ibrahim's magnificent tastes.

But peace did not last long. The peculiar circumstances of the time rapidly brought about a collision between Delhi and Jaunpur. Ibrahim and his successors contended for years against the rulers of Delhi ; these wars will be described in their proper place.

It was the timid policy of Firuz Tughluq which had brought about the separation of Bengal from the empire of Delhi. The wars between Firuz and Shams-ud-din and his successor Sikandar Shah have been described before. Although these rulers occasionally sent presents to the Sultan of Delhi, they were in reality independent

Bengal.

The establishment of the power of the Husaini dynasty opened a new era in the history of Bengal. The first ruler of the dynasty Husain Shah (1493—1519) was a man of ability who governed the country wisely and well. He fully consolidated his authority in the various provinces of his kingdom so that not a single rebellion broke out during his reign. He built mosques, and founded other charitable institutions, and granted pensions to learned and pious men. His son Nusrat Shah who came to the throne after his death was an equally remarkable ruler. He enlarged the boundaries of his kingdom by conquest and annexation, and became a prince of substance in the country.

Babar in his *Memoirs* mentions him among the powerful princes of Hindustan. Like his father, Nusrat was fond of

learning and took great interest in architecture. He built several mosques which are known to this day for their beauty and massive design. After the decline of the independent dynasty of Bengal kings, power passed into the hands of the Afghans. Sher Shah made himself master of the east after defeating the Mughal Emperor Humayun, and fully established his authority in Bihar and Bengal. In the 14th and 15th centuries there was much religious stir in Bengal. Ibn Batūtā, the Moor, who travelled in Bengal in the fourteenth century, speaks of 150 *gaddis* of faqirs in Bengal in Fakhr-ud-din's time. It was during this period that the impact of Hinduism and Islam set in motion the new forces which tended to bring the Hindus and Muslims nearer, and gave a new colour to Hindu religion. The cult of Vaiṣṇavism made great progress in Bengal, and when Chaitanya appeared upon the scene, it prospered wonderfully. He preached the doctrine of *Bhakti* or personal devotion, and by his inspiring personality electrified the souls of his disciples and admirers. Kṛṣṇa's name was chanted all over Bengal, and the numerous men and women who responded to the master's call ignored all social distinctions, and became united by the bond of love.

The new forces, as has been said before, tended to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Hindus and Muslims.

Husain Shah of Bengal was the founder of a new cult called *Satyapīr* which aimed at uniting the Hindus and the Muslims. *Satyapīr* was compounded of *Satya,* a Sanskrit word, and *Pīr* which is an Arabic word. It was the name of a deity whom both communities were to worship. There are still in Bengali literature several poems composed in honour of this new deity.

Khandesh.

The province of Khandesh was situated in the valley of the Tapti river ; it was bounded in the north by the Vindhya and Satpura ranges and in the south by the Deccan plateau, in the east by Berar and in

the west by the subah of Gujarat. It was a part of Muhammad Tughluq's empire, and continued to be a feudatory of Delhi during the reign of Firuz, who entrusted it to Malik Rājā Farrūkhi, one of his personal attendants in the year 1370. After the death of Firuz, when the empire of Delhi broke up, Malik Rājā, a man of adventurous and ambitious spirit, declared his independence. He was a broad-minded ruler who treated the Hindus well, and tried to promote the welfare of his subjects. After his death in 1399, he was succeeded by his son Malik Nāsir, who captured the famous fortress of Asirgarh from Āsā Ahīr, a chieftain of considerable power. Malik Nāsir maintained a firm hold over the territories he had inherited from his father, and when he died in 1437, he left to his successor a united Khandesh. The princes who followed him, possessed no ability, and during their reigns the fortunes of Khandesh rapidly declined. After the death of Adil, one of Nāsir's grandsons, in 1520, a series of weak rulers followed who found it difficult to resist the encroachments of foreign powers. The latter took full advantage of the weakness of the central power and the factious fights of the nobles. In 1601 the fortress of Asirgarh was conquered by Akbar, and Khandesh was annexed to the empire. The local dynasty ceased to exist.

(ii) The Bahmani Kingdom

The break-up of the empire during Muhammad's reign led the Amirs of the Deccan to revolt and set up an independent kingdom at Daulatabad with Ismail Makh as their king. Ismail, being a man of retired habits, resigned in favour of Hasan, a brave soldier who was elected king in 1347. Firishta relates that

The rise of the Bahmani Dynasty.

Hasan was originally employed in the service of Gangu, a Brahman astrologer of Delhi, who enjoyed the confidence of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. One day while Hasan was ploughing the land of his master, he came across a pot full of gold coins which he at once made over to his master. The Brahman was so pleased with Hasan's honesty that he recommended him to Sultan Muhammad who employed him in his service. The Brahman predicted a great destiny for Hasan and expressed a wish, that when he was elevated to royal dignity, he should appoint him as his minister. To this Hasan agreed, and when he was elevated to the kingly office, he assumed the title of Bahmani out of gratefulness to his old benefactor. Modern researcn has exploded Firishta's error, and the view now generally accepted is that Hasan was descended from Bahman bin Isfandiyar, king of Persia. He called himself a descendant of Bahmanshah, and this name is inscribed on his coins.[4]

He chose Gulbarga as his capital. The whole country was divided into *tarafs* which were assigned to the Amirs who had rendered him good service in the recent war. Each of these Amirs was granted a jagir on feudal tenure and had to render military service to the king. Hasan now embarked upon a brilliant career of conquest. The fort of Qandhar was recovered, and his officer, Sikandar Khan, reduced Bidar and Malkaid. Goa, Dabhol, Kolapur, and Telingana were all conquered, and towards the close of his reign his dominions extended from the east of Daulatabad to Bhongir now in the Nizam's dominions and from the river Wainganga in the north to the river Kṛṣṇā

[4] The author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir* clearly states that Hasan traced his pedigree from Bahman bin Isfandiyar. He is supported by Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, the author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Ahmad Amin Razi the author of the *Haft-Iqlim* and Haji-ud-Dabir, the author of the *Arabic History of Gujarat*. This statement is also supported by the evidence of inscriptions and coins.

in the south. The pressure of unremitting exertions told upon his health, and he died in 1359. He was succeeded by Muhammad Shah I, whom he had nominated as his heir on his death-bed.

Muhammad Shah I.

He continued his father's policy of conquest. The principal event of his reign was the war with the neighbouring Hindu kingdoms of Vijayanagar and Telingana. He defeated the Hindus who fought with great courage and determination. Their country was plundered, and temples were razed to the ground. Muhammad enjoyed peace for about a decade. But the barbarous execution of the Telingana Prince for a trivial offence again lit up the flames of war. The Hindus would not tamely submit, and after a prolonged fight of two years a peace was made, and the Raja agreed to surrender the fort of Golkunda and to pay a huge war indemnity of 33 lakhs. Golkunda was fixed as the boundary line between the two kingdoms. Soon afterwards war with Vijayanagar broke out, which assumed formidable dimensions. The humiliation of a Gulbarga messenger who had come to demand money from Vijayanagar was the immediate cause of the war.

The Raya of Vijayanagar took the offensive and marched into the Sultan's territory at the head of 30,000 horse, 100,000 foot, and 300 elephants, and laid waste the country between the Kṛṣṇā and the Tungabhadra. The fort of Mudgal was captured, and the Muslim garrison was put to the sword. Muhammad took an oath to take a terrible revenge, and marched at the head of a huge army upon Vijayanagar. He enticed the Hindu forces out of the fort by a clever stratagem, and inflicted a terrible defeat upon them. The Raya's camp was raided, though he effected his escape, but his soldiers and officers as well as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood were butchered by the ruthless Muslim soldiers. Peace was at last made with the Raya of Vijayanagar, and the Sultan took an

oath never to shed the blood of innocent men in the future.

Muhammad Shah acted ruthlessly in carrying out his domestic policy. He ordered all public distilleries to be closed and put down lawlessness with a high hand. After a reign of 17 years and 7 months he died in 1373 and was succeeded by his son Mujāhid Shah.

Mujāhid, 1373—1377.

Mujāhid showed a great preference for the Persians and the Turks, and thus by his policy of exclusion he revived the old feuds and jealousies between the Deccanis and the foreigners, which had wrecked the government of Muhammad Tughluq. But the most important problem of the time was, as usual, war with Vijayanagar over the possession of the Raichur Doab, and the fort of Raichur and Mudgal. He marched twice on Vijayanagar, but had to retreat on both occasions on account of the combination of the Hindus. Peace was concluded, but the Sultan was murdered by his cousin, Daud, who usurped the throne in 1377. He in his turn was murdered in the following year by a slave, hired by Ruh Parwar Agha, the foster-sister of Mujāhid.

After Daud's death, Muhammad Shah II came to the throne in 1378. He was a man of peace. The cessation of war enabled him to devote his time to the pursuit of literature and science. He built mosques, established public schools and monasteries, and never allowed anyone to act against the Holy Law. No rebellion occurred during his reign, and the nobles and officers all loyally served their master. The Sultan evinced a great interest in the welfare of his subjects ; and once when famine broke out, he employed ten thousand bullocks to bring grain from Malwa and Gujarat to mitigate its severity. In the last year of his life his sons conspired to seize the throne. He died in 1397 and was succeeded by his sons who were deprived of sovereignty after a brief period of six months by Firuz, a

grandson of Sultan Alauddin Hasan Shah. Firuz came to Gulbarga, and with the help of the nobles and officers seized the throne in February 1397.

Firuz Shah, 1397—1422.

The author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir* describes him as " a good, just and generous king who supported himself by copying the Quran, and the ladies of whose *haram* used to support themselves by embroidering garments and selling them." The same authority further says :—" As a ruler he was without an equal, and many records of his justice still remain on the page of time." But this seems to be an exaggeration, for Firishta clearly states, that although he observed the practices of his religion with strictness, he drank hard, was passionately fond of music, and maintained a large *haram* which included women of several nationalities. It is said that about 800 women were daily admitted into the royal seraglio by means of *muta* marriage. Frank and jovial to a degree, Firuz took delight in social intercourse, and treated his companions without the slightest reserve, but he never allowed public matters to be discussed at such convivial gatherings.

As usual, struggle with Vijayanagar began for the possession of the fort of Mudgal in 1398. Hari Har II marched an army into the Raichur Doab. Firuz also mobilised his forces, but he had also to check the Rāya of Kehrla, who had invaded Berar. The Rāya was defeated, and a treaty was made which restored the *status quo*, although the Rāya had to pay a large sum as ransom for the release of the Brahman captives seized during the war.

The war was renewed again, and in 1419 Firuz led an unprovoked attack upon the fort of Pangal, a dependency of Vijayanagar. The Sultan's troops were defeated owing to the outbreak of pestilence, and the victorious Hindus butchered the Musalmans mercilessly, ravaged their country and desecrated their mosques.

Firuz was obliged by his failing health to leave the affairs of state in the hands of his slaves. His brother Ahmad Shah became the most powerful man in the kingdom towards the close of his reign, and succeeded to the throne after his death in 1422.

He ascended the throne without opposition. His minister advised him to put to death the late Sultan's son in order to ensure his safety, but he refused to do so, and provided him with a liberal jagir at Firuzabad, where the prince utterly devoid of any political ambition frittered away his time in the pursuit of pleasure. He waged war against Vijayanagar and mercilessly put to death men, women and children to the number of 20,000. This cruelty of Ahmad Shah so exasperated the Hindus that they determined to take his life; and when he was engaged in a hunting excursion, they chased him with tremendous fury, but he was saved by his armour-bearer, Abdul Qadir. Ahmad Shah now reduced the people of Vijayanagar to such distress that Deva Rāya was compelled to sue for peace. He agreed to pay all arrears of tribute, and sent his son with 30 elephants, laden with money, jewels and other articles of untold value to the royal camp.

Ahmad Shah, 1422—35.

In 1424 he defeated the Raja of Warangal and annexed a large portion of his territory to his own dominions. He also defeated the Muslim rulers of Malwa and the neighbouring states, massacred a large number of men and captured rich booty.

He assumed the title of '*Wali*' and on his return laid the foundation of the city of Bidar, which afterwards became the recognised capital of the Bahmani kingdom. In 1429 he went to war with the chiefs of the Konkan, and fought an indecisive battle with the ruler of Gujarat. The last expedition of the reign was against Telingana to put down a Hindu revolt after which he retired from public life and resigned the throne to his son, Prince Zafar Khan. He died of illness in 1435.

Zafar Khan ascended the throne under the title of Alauddin II. He began his reign well, but later on his character degenerated, and he spent his time in debauchery and pleasure.

Alauddin II, 1435—1457.

His brother, Muhammad, whom he treated well, rose in rebellion and seized the Raichur Doab, Bijapur, and other districts with the help of Vijayanagar. But he was ultimately defeated, and pardoned, and allowed to hold the district of Raichur as jagir. But the hereditary enemy of Alauddin was the Rāya of Vijayanagar who now led a wanton attack against the Sultan's dominions. At first the struggle was indecisive, but after a siege lasting for some time, Deva Rāya agreed to pay the stipulated tribute. The administration was much disturbed by the feuds of the Deccani Muslims, who were mostly Sunnis and foreigners like the Arabs, Turks, Persians and Mughals who professed the Shia faith and thus led to a serious crime. In 1454 Khalf Hasan Malik-ul-Tujjār suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of a Hindu chief in the Konkan. As the party were moving in order to save their lives, the Deccani chief led the Sultan to believe that they meditated treason. They were invited to a feast and treacherously murdered. Alauddin died in 1457.

Alauddin was a profligate but he did not wholly neglect the interests of his subjects. He built mosques, established public schools and charitable institutions. Order was maintained throughout the kingdom, and thieves and brigands were severely punished. Though not deeply religious himself, he strictly enforced the observances of the faith and respected the feelings of his co-religionists.

Alauddin was succeeded by his eldest son Humayun. He was a monster of cruelty. He might well be praised for his learning, eloquence and wit, but at the same time we would regret his fierce disposition. He showed no compassion in shedding blood.

Humayun, 1457—61.

But he was fortunate in securing the services of Mahmud Gāwān, who served the state with rare fidelity and devotion to the last day of his life. The main interest of his reign lies in the hideous forms of cruelty which he practised with savage brutality. After the conspiracy which resulted in the release of his brothers, Hasan and Yahiya, from prison, he caused Hasan in his own presence to be thrown before a ferocious tiger who instantly killed and devoured him. The king's ferocity exceeded all bounds.

In October 1461, Humayun died a natural death; but according to Firishta the more probable account is that he was murdered by one of his servants in a state of drunkenness.

After Humayun's death Nizam was selected as king by Khwājā Jahān, Mahmud Gāwān, and the queen-mother, who was one of the most remarkable women that have appeared in the east. Nizam, being a child of eight years, the government was in the hands of the Dowager-Queen Makhdumah Jahan. Aided by Mahmud Gāwān, she set at liberty all the innocent persons who had been thrown into prison by her husband, and reinstated in their offices all the servants of the state who had been dismissed without cause.

Nizam Shah, 1461—63.

She repelled an attack led by the Rais of Orissa and Telingana; but when Mahmud Khilji of Malwa occupied Bidar, the Deccan army under Mahmud Gāwān and Khwājā Jahān suffered a crushing defeat in 1461. The queen-mother secured in this hour of need the assistance of the ruler of Gujarat on whose approach Mahmud Khilji retreated to his country. A second attempt by Mahmud Khilji was unsuccessful for the same reason. Nizam Shah died all of a sudden in 1463 when he was about to be married.

Muhammad Shah, brother of the late king, was selected by the nobles. The new king had the Khwājā Jahān murdered

on account of the embezzlement of public funds, and Mahmud Gāwān became the chief authority in the state. He had unlimited power. He loyally served the state for several years. He fought wars, subdued countries, and increased the Bahmani dominions to an extent never reached before. He was sent with a large force against the Hindu kingdom of Konkan, and compelled the chief to surrender the fortress of Kalna, the modern Visālgarh. He also compelled the Raja of Orissa to pay tribute, but the most remarkable exploit of the Sultan was the raid on Kānchī or Conjeevaram in the course of a campaign against Narasinha, Raya of Vijayanagar. The city was captured, and an immense booty fell into the hands of the victors.

Muhammad Shah III, 1463—82.

In 1474 a severe famine occurred in the Deccan which is known as the Bijapur famine. In 1470 Athnasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant, visited Bidar. He has made observations regarding the country, its government and the people. He also gives a description of the Sultan's hunting expeditions and his palace.

Mahmud Gāwān was a great administrator. In spite of the feuds between the two parties in the kingdom—the Deccanis and the Irānīs—which were a source of great trouble, Mahmud Gāwān was able to carry out his work of reform with success. No department seems to have escaped his attention. He organised the finances, improved the administration of justice, encouraged public education, and instituted a survey of village lands to make the state demand of revenue just and equitable. Corrupt practices were put down ; the army was reformed ; better discipline was enforced, and the prospects of the soldiers were improved.

Administrative Reform.

But the Deccanis who were jealous of his influence formed a conspiracy against him and forged a letter of treasonable

contents, purporting to have been written by him to Narasinha Rāya. The king was persuaded to have him murdered as a traitor, in a fit of drunkenness. Thus passed away by the cruel hand of the assassin one of the purest characters of the age, and Meadows Taylor rightly observes that with him departed all the cohesion and the power of the Bahmani kingdom.

Death of Mahmud Gāwān.

Mahmud Gāwān was one of the most remarkable mediæval statesmen. He was completely devoted to the state, and served it all his life with great ability and distinction. Much has already been said about his public career, which was full of unremitting exertions for the benefit of the state. But the Khwājā shone better in private life. He loved simplicity and always felt for the poor. All Muslim chroniclers agree in saying that he was courageous, magnanimous, a lover of justice and free from the vices common to the great men of his age. His wants were few, and his time was mostly passed in the company of scholars and divines. He possessed a fine library in his college at Bidar which contained 3,000 books. After the day's toil the learned Khwājā repaired to the college in the evening, and there found his most favourite recreation in the company of learned men. He was well-versed in Mathematics, the science of Medicine, literature and was a master of epistolary style. Firishta attributes to him the authorship of two works—the *Rauzat-ul-Insha* and the *Diwan-i-ashr*. But although the Khwājā was pious and learned, he found it difficult to rise above the religious prejudices of the age, and often took part in crusades against idolatry. All things said, the murder of such a devoted servant was a grave blunder, and more than anything else it accelerated the ruin of the Bahmani dynasty.

Character of Mahmud Gāwān.

Muhammad Shah died in 1482, and was succeeded by his

son Mahmud Shah who was only 12 years of age. He turned out an imbecile and spent his time in merriment and revelry. Disorders increased on all sides, and provincial governors began to declare their independence. The Bahmani kingdom was now restricted to Bidar and the provinces near the capital. Amir Barid, the new minister, was the virtual ruler; he kept Mahmud in a state of humiliating dependence upon himself. After Mahmud's death in 1518 the Bahmani kingdom practically came to an end.

The downfall of the Bahmani kingdom.

The kingdom broke up into five independent principalities which were:—

1. The Imad Shahi dynasty of Berar.
2. The Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar.
3. The Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur.
4. The Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golkunda.
5. The Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar.

General remarks.

The Bahmani dynasty contained in all fourteen kings. They were with a few exceptions cruel and ferocious, and never hesitated in shedding the blood of the Hindus. The founder of the dynasty, Hassan Kāngū, was a capable administrator, but he too was relentless in his attitude towards the Hindus. His successors were mostly debauched and unprincipled tyrants who were always hampered in their work by the dissensions of the Deccani and foreign Amirs. Attempts at making the administration efficient were made from time to time, but they never succeeded except perhaps during the ministry of Mahmud Gāwān. The Hindus were employed by the state in the lower branches of the administration, but that was inevitable because they had better knowledge and experience of revenue affairs. Mahmud Gāwān reformed the system of revenue, and allowed the agriculturists to pay their dues in cash or kind. Athnasius Nikitin says that the country was populous, the lands well

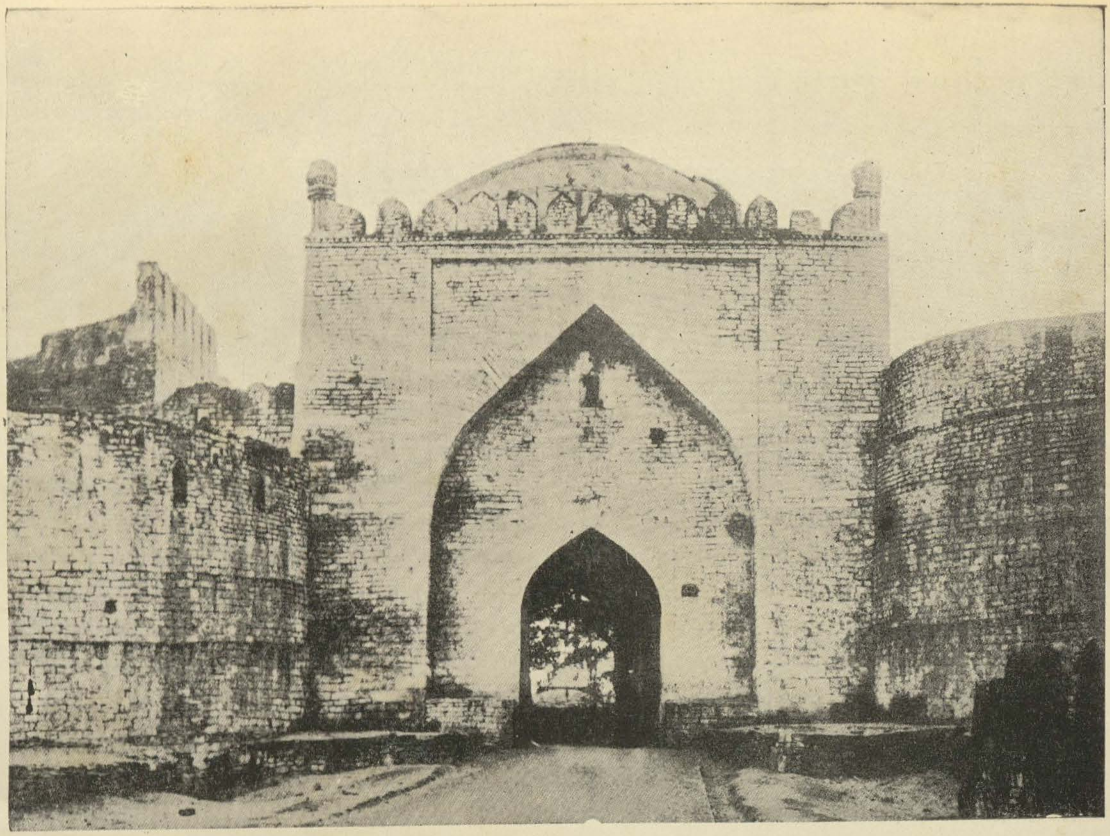
cultivated, the roads safe from robbers, and the capital of the kingdom, a magnificent city with parks and promenades. The nobles lived in great magnificence, but the lot of the people in the country was hard and miserable. It is from his remarks that Dr. Smith draws the conclusion that the country must have been sucked dry. But he forgets that mediæval monarchs all over the world felt no scruples in spending the people's money with a light heart on personal pleasures. It is true the Bahmanids often plundered the property of their enemies, but they were never guilty of levying oppressive exactions even in the time of war. They provided facilities of irrigation for the development of agriculture in their dominions, and took interest in the welfare of the peasantry. Some of them were patrons of arts and education, and made endowments for the maintenance of the learned and pious. They were not great builders. The only things worthy of mention are the city of Bidar, which was full of beautiful buildings, and certain forts which exist to this day.

In judging the Bahmanids it would be unfair to apply to their conduct the standards of today. Even in the West in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries religious persecution was the order of the day. Religion and politics were often mixed up, and ambitious rulers exploited religious zeal for their own advantage. If we keep this fact in mind, we can neither accept the unqualified praise which Meadows Taylor bestows upon the Bahmanids nor their wholesale condemnation which is to be found in Dr. Vincent Smith's *Oxford History of India*.

THE FIVE MUHAMMADAN KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN

The Imād Shahi dynasty was founded by Fatah Ullah Imād Shah, originally a Hindu from Carnatic. He made a name in the service of Khan-i-Jahan, the viceroy of Berar, and succeeded him. He was the first to declare his independence. His dynasty ruled

Berar.



Fort of Bidar

To face page 186

till 1574 when it was incorporated in the Nizam Shahi dominions.

Bijapur.

The Adil Shahi dynasty was founded by Yusuf Adil Khan, a slave purchased by Mahmud Gāwān. But according to Firishta he was a son of Sultan Murad II of Turkey who died in 1451. When his eldest brother Muhammad came to the throne he ordered the expulsion of all the male children of the late Sultan ; but Yusuf was saved by the tact of his mother. He rose to high rank through the favour of his patron, Mahmud Gāwān. He declared his independence in 1489.

His formidable enemy Qasim Barid incited the Rāya of Vijayanagar to declare war upon Bijapur. But Narasinha suffered a defeat. In 1495 he helped Qasim Barid in defeating Dastur Dinar, the governor of Gulburga, who had revolted. But he managed to have Gulburga restored to him and saved his life. Yusuf was anxious to obtain Gulburga for himself. Qasim was defeated, and his defeat greatly enhanced the prestige of Ali Adil Shah. In 1502 he declared the Shia creed to be the religion of the state, but granted perfect toleration to the Sunnis. Nevertheless, the neighbouring powers joined against him. He fled to Berar, restored the Sunni faith and withdrew to Khandesh.

Meanwhile Imādul-Mulk wrote to the allies that Amir Barid was using them for his own selfish end. So the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Golkunda left the field. Amir Barīd, left alone, was defeated by Yūsuf, who entered Bijapur in triumph. Yūsuf Adil Shah is one of the most remarkable rulers of the Deccan. He was a patron of letters, and learned men from Persia, Turkistan, and Rum came to his court and enjoyed his bounty. He was free from bigotry, and religion in his eyes was no bar to public employment. Firishta says that he was 'handsome in person, eloquent in speech, and eminent for his learning, liberality and valour.'

Yusuf Adil was followed by Ismail who was only nine years of age at the time of his accession. The affairs of the state were managed by Kamāl Khan, an officer of the late king, but he proved a traitor. His designs were frustrated by the queen-mother who had him assassinated by a slave. Ismail now took the reins of government in his own hands. But he had to fight against Vijayanagar and Ahmadnagar. He was victorious in all his wars, and recovered possession of the Raichur Doab from Vijayanagar. Ismail died in 1534, and was succeeded by Mallu Adil Shah, but he was blinded and dethroned. After him his brother Ibrahim was proclaimed king.

Ismail Shah.

He first restored the Sunni faith and replaced all foreigners in his service by the Deccanis and Abyssinians. He defeated the rulers of Bidar, Ahmadnagar, and Golkunda and displayed commendable energy, but debauchery soon brought about his ruin. He fell ill and died in 1557. He was succeeded by Ali Adil Shah,

Ibrahim Adil Shah, I.

The new Sultan restored the Shia faith and his policy caused discontent in the country. With the help of the Rāya of Vijayanagar he ravaged the Ahmadnagar territory in 1558. The Hindus perpetrated the most horrible excesses which disgusted even their ally Ali Adil. The growing power of Vijayanagar seemed to be a menace to the existence of the Muslim monarchies. Bijapur, Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda combined against Vijayanagar and defeated Ram Rāya at Talikota in 1565. Ali Adil was assassinated in 1579.

Ali Adil Shah.

The heir to the throne was a minor, and the government was carried on by his mother Chand Bibi who is so famous in Indian history. Ibrahim was successful in a war with Ahmadnagar in 1594 when the Sultan was slain in battle. He died in 1626. He was the most remarkable ruler of his dynasty.

Ibrahim Adil Shah, II.

The Adil Shahis fought long and hard against the Mughals, and Bijapur was finally annexed to the empire in 1686 by Aurangzeb.

Ahmadnagar.

The Nizam Shahi dynasty was founded by Nizamul-mulk Bahri, the leader of the Deccan party at Bidar. After Mahmud Gāwān's death, he was appointed minister. His son Malik Ahmad was appointed governor of Junir. He intended to join his son, but his plans were foiled by the governor of Bidar, who had him strangled to death with the king's permission. Malik Ahmad declared his independence in 1498, and transferred his court to Ahmadnagar. He obtained possession of Daulatabad in 1499 after a hard fight. On his death he was succeeded by his son Burhan Nizam Shah.

Burhan and his successors.

Burhan (1508—53) was a minor ; and so the affairs of the state were managed by his father's old officers. He married a Bijapur princess. He fell out with the king of Bijapur and brought about almost a diplomatic revolution by concluding an alliance with the Rāya of Vijayanagar.

In 1553 he laid siege to Bijapur, but he died shortly afterwards. The subsequent history of Ahmadnagar is unimportant except for the heroic defence made by Chand Bibi against Prince Murad. Ahmadnagar was finally conquered by the imperialists in 1600.

Golkunda.

The Qutb Shahi dynasty was founded by Qutb-ul-mulk. He was well educated, and was originally employed in the secretariat of Mahmud Shah Bahmani. By dint of his ability he rose to be the governor of Telingana. He declared his independence in 1518. On his death in 1543, he was succeeded by a series of weak rulers who maintained their independence against the Mughals until 1687 when Golkunda was finally annexed to the empire by Aurangzeb.

Amir Barid, son of Qasim Barid, assumed the title of king, and declared his independence in 1526, when the last Sultan, Kalimullah, fled to Bijapur. The dynasty lingered till 1609 when it was supplanted by the Adil Shahis who annexed the province to their dominions.

Bidar.

(iii) The Rise of Vijayanagar

The rise of the kingdom of Vijayanagar dates from the time of the disorders which occurred during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq. Sewell, the historian of the Vijayanagar Empire, gives seven traditionary accounts of the origin of the empire.[5] But the most probable account is that which attributes its origin to two brothers, Hari Hara and Bukka, who were employed in the treasury of Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya of Warangal. They fled from their country in 1323 when it was overrun by the Muslims. They took up service with the Raja of Anagondi in the Raichur district, but they were taken to Delhi when that country fell into the hands of the Muslims. This excited the Hindus so much that they rose in rebellion, and the Sultan released the two brothers, and restored them to the country of Anagondi which they held as tributaries of the empire of Delhi. With the help of the famous sage and scholar Vidyāraṇya (literally, forest of learning) they founded in the year 1336 A.D. the imperial city on the bank of the Tungabhadra merely as a place of shelter against the persecutions and aggressions of the Muslim invaders, and Hari Hara became the first ruler of the dynasty.

Foundation of the Empire.

5 Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire*, pp. 20—22.

By the year 1340 Hari Hara had established his sway over the valley of the Tungabhadra, portions of the Konkon, and the Malabar coast.

The early kings.

Hari Hara and his brother never assumed royal titles. Muslim historians tell us that Hari Hara took part in the confederacy organised by Kṛṣṇā Nāyak, son of Pratap Rudra Deva of Warangal, in 1344, to drive the Muslims out of the Deccan. The evidence of inscriptions also points to the fact that Hari Hara I assisted in this confederacy, and fought against the Muslim forces. The death of the last king of the Hoysala dynasty—Virūpākṣa Ballāla—in 1346 coupled with the disappearance of the power of the Sultan of Delhi enabled the valiant brothers to bring under their control the dominions of the Hoysalas. The brothers then embarked upon a brilliant career of conquest. Their efforts were crowned with success, so much so, that within the lifetime of Hari Hara, the kingdom extended from the Kṛṣṇā in the north to the neighbourhood of the Kāverī in the south, and comprised the whole country situated between the eastern and western oceans. But the northward expansion of the rising kingdom was checked by the Bahmanids. Both tried to be supreme in the Deccan, and their ambitions led them to fight against each other with great ferocity and pertinacity. Hari Hara divided his kingdom into provinces, which he entrusted to scions of the royal family and trustworthy viceroys whose loyalty had been proved by long and faithful service. Hari Hara died about 1353, and was succeeded by his brother Bukka who completed the building of the city of Vijayanagar, and enlarged its dimensions. He is described in the inscriptions as the master of the eastern, western, and southern oceans. This is no doubt an exaggeration ; but we might easily conclude that he was a remarkable ruler. He sent a mission to the emperor of China, and waged wars against the Bahmani kingdom. He was a tolerant and liberal-minded ruler ; and it is said that on

one occasion he brought about a reconciliation between the Jainas and Vaiṣṇavas by his intervention.

Bukka died in 1379, and was succeeded by Hari Hara II the first king of the dynasty who assumed imperial titles and called himself Mahārājādhirājā. He endowed temples, and tried to consolidate his vast possessions. Sewell writes that he was always a lover of peace, and Vincent Smith says that he had a quiet time so far as the Muslims were concerned, and enjoyed leisure which he devoted to consolidating his dominion over the whole of Southern India, including Trichinopoly and Conjeevaram (Kānchī). He turned his attention to other countries of the south, and his general, Gunda, conquered several new provinces. Hari Hara II died on the 30th August, 1404, and was succeeded by his son who ruled only for a short time. He was succeeded by Deva Rāya who had to fight again and again against the Bahmanids. Firishta says that on one occasion Firuz compelled him to give his daughter in marriage to the Sultan. But we may well doubt whether the marriage took place, for the author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir*, who is a detailed and accurate chronicler, does not make even a casual mention of this marriage, nor is there any mention of it in the inscriptions. Deva Rāya died in 1410, and was succeeded by his son Vijaya Rāya who reigned for nine years. He was succeeded by Deva Rāya II.

Hari Hara II.

Deva Rāya followed the military traditions of his predecessors and declared war against the Bahmanids. Being impressed by the superior strength of the Muslim cavalry, he employed Muslim horsemen in his service, but even this somewhat unusual step proved of no avail. When the war broke out again in 1443, the Muslims defeated the Rāya's forces, and compelled him to pay tribute. During Deva Rāya II's reign Vijayanagar was visited by two foreigners—one of them was

Deva Raya II, 1419—1446.

Nicolo Conti, an Italian sojourner, and the other was Abdur Razzāq, an envoy from Persia. Both have left valuable observations regarding the city and the empire of Vijayanagar.

Nicolo Conti.

He visited Vijayangar about the year 1420 or 1421 and he describes it thus:—

"The great city of Bizengalia is situated near very steep mountains. The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried up to the mountains and enclose the valleys at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms.

"The inhabitants of this region marry as many wives as they please, who are burnt with their dead husbands. Their king is more powerful than all other kings of India. He takes to himself 12,000 wives, of whom 4,000 follow him on foot wherever he may go, and are employed solely in the service of the kitchen. A like number, more handsomely equipped, ride on horseback. The remainder are carried by men in litters, of whom 2,000 or 3,000 are selected as his wives, on condition that at his death they should voluntarily burn themselves with him, which is considered to be a great honour for them.

"At a certain time of the year their idol is carried through the city, placed between two chariots, in which are young women richly adorned, who sing hymns to the god, and accompanied by a great concourse of people. Many, carried away by the fervour of their faith, cast themselves on the ground before the wheels, in order that they may be crushed to death—a mode of death which they say is very acceptable to their god, others making an incision in their side, and inserting a rope thus through their body, hang themselves to the chariot by way of ornament and thus suspended and half-dead accompany

their idol. This kind of sacrifice they consider the best and most acceptable of all.

"Thrice in the year they keep festivals of special solemnity. On one of these occasions the males and females of all ages, having bathed in the rivers or the sea, clothe themselves in new garments, and spend three entire days in singing, dancing and feasting. On another of these festivals they fix up within their temples, and on the outside on their roofs an innumerable number of lamps of oil of *susimanni* which are kept burning day and night. On the third, which lasts nine days, they set up in all the highways large beams, like the masts of small ships, to the upper part of which are attached pieces of very beautiful cloth of various kinds interwoven with gold. On the summit of each of these beams is each day placed a man of pious aspiration, dedicated to religion, capable of enduring all things with equanimity, who is to pray for the favour of god. These men are assailed by the people, who pelt them with orange, lemons, and other odoriferous fruits, all of which they bear most patiently. There are also three other festival days, during which they sprinkle all passers-by, even the king and queen themselves, with saffron water, placed for the purpose by the wayside. This is received by all with much laughter."

Abdur Razzāq's account of Vijayanagar.

Twenty years after Nicolo Conti, Abdur Razzāq,[6] an envoy from Persia, visited Vijayanagar in 1442. He stayed in the famous city till the beginning of April 1443. He gives a detailed account of the city and its Rāya, and his observations are as follows :—

6 A detailed account of Abdur Razzāq is in the *Matla-us-Sadain*, Elliot, IV, pp. 105—120. He was born at Herat in 1413. Shah Rukh of Persia sent him as an ambassador to Vijayanagar. He died in 1482.

"One day messengers came from the king to summon me, and towards the evening I went to the court, and presented five beautiful horses and two trays each containing nine pieces of damask and satin. The king was seated in great state in the forty-pillared hall, and a great crowd of Brahmans and others stood on the right and left of him. He was clothed in a robe of *Zaitun satin* and he had around his neck a collar composed of pure pearls of regal excellence, the value of which a jeweller would find it difficult to calculate. He was of an olive colour, of a spare body and rather tall. He was exceedingly young, for there was only some slight down upon his cheeks and none upon his chin. His whole appearance was very prepossessing . . . . The daily provision forwarded to me comprised two sheep, four couple of fowls, five *mans* of rice, one *man* of butter, one *man* of sugar, and two *varahas* gold. This occurred every day. Twice a week I was summoned to the presence towards the evening when the king asked me several questions respecting the Khakan-i-Said, and each time I received a packet of betel, a purse of *fanams* and some *miskals* of camphor.

The Rāya.

"The city of Bisanagar is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It is so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other. Beyond the circuit of the outer wall there is an esplanade extending for about fifty yards, in which stones are fixed near one another to the height of a man; one-half buried firmly in the earth, and the other half rises above it, so that neither foot nor horse, however bold, can advance with facility near the outer wall.

The City.

". . . . . Each class of men belonging to each profession has shops contiguous the one to the other; the

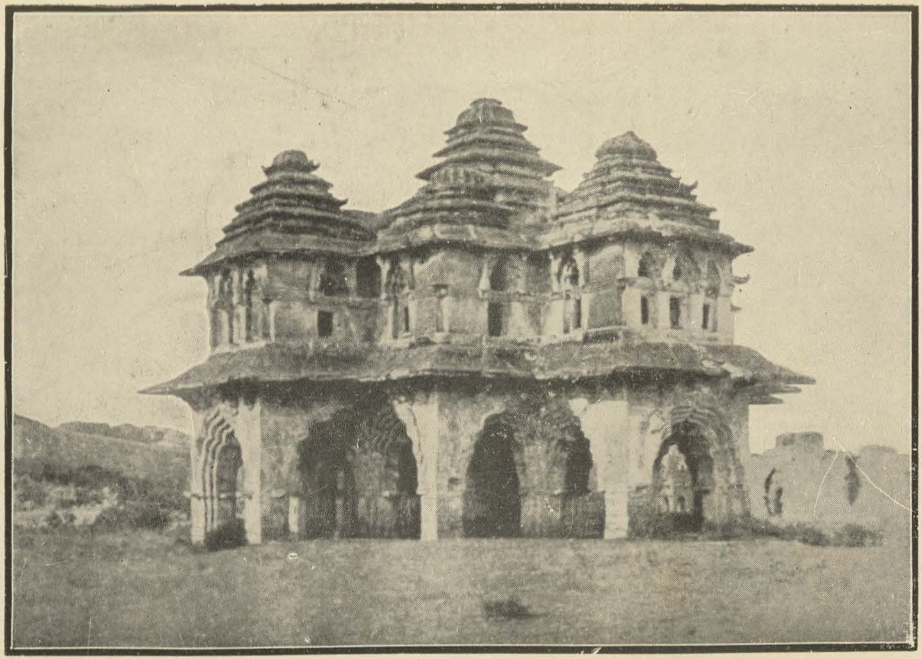
jewellers sell publicly in the bazar pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. In this agreeable locality, as well as in the king's palace, one sees numerous running streams and canals formed of chiselled stone, polished and smooth.

The bazars and offices.

"On the left of the Sultan's portico, rises the *diwankhana* (the council house) which is extremely large and looks like a palace. In front of it is a hall, the height of which is above the stature of a man, its length thirty *ghez,* and its breadth ten. In it is placed the *daftarkhana* (the archives), and here sit the scribes . . . . In the middle of this palace upon a high estrade is seated an eunuch, called Daiang who alone presides over the diwan. At the end of the hall stand chobdars (hussars) drawn up in line. Every man who comes upon any business, passes between the chobdars, offers a small present, prostrates himself with his face to the ground, then rising up explains the business which brought him there and the Daiang pronounces his opinion, according to the principles of justice adopted in this kingdom, and no one thereafter is allowed to make any appeal."

Deva Rāya II probably died in 1449, and was succeeded by his two sons one after the other. But they were too weak to manage the large empire which he had left to them. The throne was usurped by Saluva-Narasinha, the most powerful noble in Karnāta and Telingana. This is known as the first usurpation. Saluva-Narasinha's power did not last long. His successor had to make room for his redoubtable general Nareśa Nāyaka of Tuluva descent, who became the founder of a new dynasty. The most famous king of this dynasty was Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya.

A new dynasty.



Council Chamber, Vijayanagar

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Kṛṣṇā Deva Rāya is said to have ascended the throne of Vijayanagar in 1509 A.D. Under him Vijayanagar attained to the zenith of its greatness and prosperity. He fought the Muslims of the Deccan on equal terms, and avenged the wrongs that had been done to his predecessors. He was an able and accomplished monarch. Paes who saw him with his own eyes thus describes him :

Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's character and personality.

> " The king is of medium height, and of fair complexion and good figure, rather fat than thin ; he has on his face signs of small-pox. He is the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry ; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners, and receives them kindly, asking about all their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to sudden fits of rage. . . ."

The history of this period is a record of bloody wars. There is no ruler among the sovereigns of the Deccan, both Hindu and Muslim, worthy of comparison with Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya. Although a Vaiṣṇava himself, he granted the fullest liberty of worship to his subjects. He was very kind and hospitable to foreigners who speak highly of his liberality, his genial appearance and his elevated culture. He was a brilliant conversationalist, and the inscriptions show that he was a great patron of Sanskrit and Telugu literature. His court was adorned by eight celebrated poets who were known as the *aṣṭa-diggajas*. He was not wanting in military prowess, and gave proof of his organising capacity and valour in the wars he waged against his enemies. A fearless and renowned captain of war, Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya was a man of charitable disposition, and he made numerous gifts to temples and Brahmans. All things considered, he was one of the most

remarkable rulers that have appeared in Southern India. Sewell gives an interesting account of his position and personality :

> "Kṛṣṇa Deva was not only monarch *de jure*, was in the practical fact an absolute sovereign of extensive power and strong personal influence. He was the real ruler. He was physically strong in his best days, and kept his strength up to the highest pitch by hard bodily exercise. He rose early and developed all his muscles by the use of the Indian clubs and the use of the sword ; he was a fine rider, and was blessed with a noble presence which favourably impressed all who came in contact with him. He commanded his enormous armies in person, was able, brave and statesmanlike, and was withal a man of much gentleness and generosity of character. He was beloved by all and respected by all. The only blot on his scutcheon is, that after his great success over the Muhammadan king he grew to be haughty and insolent in his demands."

Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's conquests extended far and wide. He defeated the Rāya of Orissa and married a princess of the royal house. But his most important achievement was the defeat of Adil Shah of Bijapur in 1520. The Muslim camp was sacked and enormous booty fell into the hands of the Hindus. Adil Shah's prestige was so completely shattered that for a time he ceased to think of further conquest in the south, and concentrated his attention on organising his resources for a fresh and more determined struggle. The Hindus behaved so haughtily in the hour of victory that their conduct gave terrible offence to the Muslim powers, and made them the objects of universal hatred in all Muslim circles in the Deccan.

Wars and Conquests.

The Portuguese had friendly relations with the Rāya of Vijayanagar who greatly benefited by their trade in horses and other useful articles. In 1510 the Portuguese governor Albuquerque sent a mission to Vijayanagar to obtain permission to build a fort at Bhatkal. This was granted when the Portuguese seized Goa, which has always been one of their valuable possessions. The mutual feuds of the Hindu and Muslim rulers of the Deccan increased the political importance of these foreign traders, for their assistance was often sought by the contending parties.

Relations with the Portuguese.

The conquests of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya considerably enlarged the extent of the empire. It extended over the area which is now covered by the Madras Presidency, the Mysore and certain other states of the Deccan. It reached to Cuttack in the east and Salsette in the west, and towards the south it touched the extreme border of the peninsula. The expansion of the empire and its great resources were a matter of supreme anxiety to the Muslim rulers of the Deccan, who always kept themselves in a state of readiness for war, and left no stone unturned to reduce its power or lower its prestige.

The extent of the empire.

After Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's death a period of decline began. The new ruler Achyuta Deva, who was a brother of the late king, was an incompetent man who found it difficult to guard the state against his jealous neighbours. The Sultan of Bijapur seized the fortresses of Raichur and Mudgal, and thus humiliated the Rāya. After his death in 1542, Achyuta was succeeded by Sadāśiva Rāya, the son of a deceased brother of his, but since he was merely a figure-head, all power passed into the hands of Rāma Rāya Saluva, son of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's famous Minister Saluva Timma. Rāma Rāya was a capable man, but his pride and arrogance had given offence to his allies and opponents alike.

The tide turns.

In 1543 with the help of Ahmadnagar and Golkunda, he declared war upon Bijapur, but it was saved by the diplomacy of Ali Adil Shah's minister Asad Khan, who detached the Rāya from the coalition and made peace with Burhan. But a fresh shuffle of cards followed when in 1557 Bijapur, Golkunda, and Vijayanagar combined to attack Ahmadnagar. The whole country was laid waste by the Hindus and Firishta writes :—

> "The infidels of Vijayanagar, who for many years had been wishing such an event, left no cruelty unpractised ; they insulted the honour of the Musalman women, destroyed the mosques, and did not even respect the sacred Quran."

This atrocious conduct of the Hindus outraged Muslim sentiment and alienated their allies. They determined to crush the Hindu State, and giving up all their differences formed a grand alliance against Vijayanagar. In 1564 Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar combined but Berar remained aloof from the confederacy. The formidable coalition, called into existence by irreconcilable hatred, took a revenge which has no parallel in the history of the south.

Battle of Talikota, 1565.

The allies began their southward march on December 25, 1564, and met near the town of Talikota on the bank of the Kṛṣṇā. The Rāya treated their movements with indifference. He used 'scornful language towards their ambassadors and regarded their enmity as of little moment.' But he soon discovered his mistake. He sent his youngest brother Tirumala with 20,000 horse, 100,000 foot and 500 elephants to guard the passages of the Kṛṣṇā at all points, and despatched a brother with another force. The remaining troops he kept under his command and marched to the field of battle. The allies also made mighty preparations. Such huge armies had never met each other before on a field of battle in the south. The fight began. At

first the Hindus seemed victorious, but the tide turned when the artillery wing of the allied army charged the Hindu host with bags, filled with copper coins, and in a short time 5,000 Hindus were slain. This was followed by a fearful cavalry charge. Rāma Rāya was captured and was beheaded by Husain Nizamshah with the exclamation, "Now I am avenged of thee. Let God do what he will to me." The army was instantly seized with panic. The battle ended in a complete rout. About 100,000 Hindus were slain, and the plunder was so great that "every man in the allied army became rich in gold, jewels, effects, tents, arms, horses, and slaves, as the Sultan left every person in possession of what he had acquired only taking elephants for his own use. Then the victorious allies proceeded towards the city of Vijayanagar which was thoroughly sacked. Its wealth was seized and its population was destroyed. No words can describe the horrors and misery which the people of Vijayanagar had to suffer at the hands of the Muslims.

The scene is described by Sewell in these words :—

> "The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Musalmans had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital, and from that time forward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy, and they carried out their object relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy ; broke down the temples and palaces and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the kings, that with the exception of a few great stone-built temples and walls, nothing now remains, but a heap of ruins to mark the spot where once stately buildings stood. They demolished the statues, and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narsinha monolith. Nothing seemed to

escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Vitthala-swami near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crow-bars and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city ; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next, seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description."

The battle of Talikota is one of the most decisive battles in Indian history. It sealed the fate of the great Hindu Empire of the South. Its fall was followed by anarchy and misrule, and the Muslims who were elated at the ruin of their formidable rival soon began to lose their strength and vigour. The fear of Vijayanagar was to them a blessing in disguise. It had kept them alert and active. But as soon as this fear vanished, they quarrelled among themselves, and thus fell an easy prey to the ambitious Mughal Emperors of the north.

Effect of the battle of Talikota.

After the fall of Rāma Rāya his brother Tirumala exercised sovereignty in Sadāśiva's name, but about the year 1570 he usurped the throne, and laid the foundations of a new dynasty. Tirumala's second son, Ranga II, was succeeded on the throne by Venkata I about 1586. He was the most remarkable prince of the dynasty, a man of ability and character, who extended his patronage to poets and learned men. The successors of Venkata were

A new dynasty.

powerless to preserve intact the small dominion they had inherited from him, and under them the dynasty gradually dwindled into insignificance. The Muslims seized much of the territory of the Empire, and the Naiks of Madurā and Tanjore built principalities for themselves out of its fragments.

Administration.

The empire was a vast feudal organisation, and the king was the apex of the whole system. He was assisted by a council composed of ministers, provincial governors, military commanders, men of the priestly class and poets. But the government was highly centralised, and the king a perfect autocrat. His authority was unlimited. He looked after the civil administration, and directed the military affairs of the empire, and acted as judge in cases that were submitted to him for decision. The principal officers of the state were the prime-minister, the chief treasurer, the keeper of the royal jewels, the prefect of the police, who were assisted by a number of lesser officials. The prime-minister was the king's chief adviser on all important questions. The prefect of the police was responsible for maintaining order in the city. The kings of Vijayanagar maintained a splendid court on which they spent huge sums of money. It was attended by nobles, learned priests, astrologers and musicians, and on festive occasions fireworks were displayed, and various other entertainments were provided by the state.

There was a well-regulated system of local government. The empire was divided into more than 200 provinces, subdivided into *Naḍus* or *Koṭṭams*, which were again subdivided into small groups of villages and towns. Each province was held by a viceroy, who either belonged to the royal family or was a powerful noble of the state. The province was merely a replica of the empire. The viceroy kept his own army, held his own court, and practically acted as a despot within his jurisdiction. But he had to render account of his stewardship to the emperor, and in time of war he was liable to render

military service. Though the tenure of the provincial governors was uncertain, they seem to have thoroughly enjoyed their time, while they were in office.

The system of local government extended to villages. The village was, as it had been from time immemorial, the unit of administration. The village moot managed its own affairs through its hereditary officers called the Ayagars. Some of them decided petty disputes, collected revenues, and enforced law and order. The village communities served a great purpose. They kept the imperial government in touch with the people.

The kings of Vijayanagar enjoyed a large income. The main source was the land revenue. The Portuguese chronicler tells us that the captains held land from the king, and they made it over to husbandmen who paid nine-tenths of their produce to their lords, who in their turn paid one-half to the king. This seems to be an exaggeration for the peasantry could not live on barely one-tenth of the produce of their labour. Besides the land tax, the state levied a large number of cesses which considerably augmented its income. Even prostitutes were taxed, and the large income from this source was spent on maintaining a police force which was attached to the prefect of the city. The peasant was often rack-rented and heavily assessed and the tax-collectors dealt with him harshly.

The military organisation was also based on a feudal basis. Besides the king's personal troops, the provincial governors supplied their quota in time of war, and were required to give every kind of assistance. There is a difference of opinion among historians regarding the total numerical strength of the Vijayanagar armies. One authority writes that in 1520 Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya had at his disposal a huge army consisting of 703,660 foot, 32,600 horse and 551 elephants and a large number of sappers and camp followers. These figures are considerably over-estimated, and it is highly improbable that the army of the Rāya should have been so large. The army

was organised like other Hindu armies of the middle ages. It consisted of elephants, cavalry, and infantry, but in fighting strength it was inferior to the Muslim armies of the north. Much reliance was placed upon elephants, but these were powerless against skilled archers and well-trained Muslim cavalry leaders.

Justice was administered in a rough and ready fashion according to the discretion of the authorities. Petitions could be made to the king or to the prime-minister. Justice in civil cases was dispensed according to the principles of Hindu Law and local usage. The criminal law was harsh and barbarous. Fines were levied and torture was frequently resorted to. Theft, adultery and treason were punished with death or mutilation. The members of the priestly order were exempt from capital punishment.

Social condition.

There was a great contrast between the splendour of the court and the squalor and poverty of the cottage. Foreign visitors dwell at length upon the magnificence of royal processions and festivals at the capital and the wealth and luxury of the nobles. Duelling was looked upon as a recognised method of settling disputes. The practice of *Satī* was in vogue, and the Brahmans freely commended this kind of self-immolation. But the position of women at the capital indicates a highly satisfactory state of affairs. There were women wrestlers, astrologers, soothsayers, and a staff of women clerks was employed within the palace gates to keep accounts of the royal household. This shows that women were fairly well educated and experienced in the business of the state. Great laxity seems to have prevailed in the matter of diet. Though the Brahmans never killed or ate any living thing, the people used nearly all kinds of meat. The flesh of oxen and cows was strictly prohibited, and even the kings scrupulously observed this rule. Every animal had to be sold alive in the markets.

Brahmans were held in high esteem. They were, according to Nuniz, honest men, very good at accounts, talented, well-formed but incapable of doing hard work. Bloody sacrifices were common. The wealth of the capital fostered luxury which brought in its train numerous vices.

CHAPTER IX

AN ERA OF DECLINE

Khizr Khan had secured the throne of Delhi but his position was far from enviable. He hesitated to assume publicly the title of king and professed to rule merely as the vicegerent of Timur. The empire had suffered in prestige and lost in territory since the invasion of Timur owing to the ambition and greed of provincial governors, and the process of disintegration that had set in had not yet come to an end. At the capital, the parties scrambled for power, and changed their position with astonishing rapidity, and their leaders acted according to the dictates of self-interest. The Doab had been, since the days of Balban, a most refractory part of the empire, and the Zamindars of Etawah, mostly Rajputs of the Rathor clan, Katehar, Kanauj, and Badaon withheld their tribute and disregarded the central power. They stirred up strife with such persistence that again and again punitive expeditions had to be undertaken in order to chastise them. The kingdoms of Malwa, Jaunpur and Gujarat were quite independent of Delhi. They were engaged in fighting with their neighbours and amongst themselves, and often encroached upon the territory of Delhi. The rulers of Malwa and Gujarat fought among themselves and with the Rajputs whom they prevented from taking any interest in the politics of Delhi. Not far from the capital, the Mewatis were seething with discontent ; they withheld tribute and wavered in their allegiance. Towards the northern frontier the Khokhars carried on their depredations at Multan and Lahore, and wished to profit by the general anarchy that was prevailing all over

The political situation.

the country. The Turk-bacchas at Sarhind were equally restive. They fomented intrigues and formed conspiracies to establish their own influence. The Muslim governors in the provinces waged war against their neighbours, and acted as independent despots. The prestige of the monarchy was gone, and the Muslim community had lost its old strength and vigour. There was no bond of sympathy between the Hindus and Muslims, and they often fought among themselves. The political situation at the opening of the fifteenth century was full of anxiety, and the task of social reconstruction before the Saiyyads was an exceedingly difficult one.

The political confusion that prevailed at Delhi enabled Khizr Khan to acquire more power, and in 1414 he overpowered Daulat Khan, and took possession of the capital. The most important problem before him was how to establish order in the Doab and in those provinces which still acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi. His Wazir-Taj-ul-mulk marched into the district of Katehar in 1414 and ravaged the country.

Khizr Khan, 1414—21.

Rai Hara Singh fled without offering resistance, but he was pursued by the royal forces and compelled to surrender. The Hindu Zamindars of Khor,[1] Kampila, Sakit,[2] Parham, Gwalior, Seori and Chandwar submitted and paid tribute. Jalesar[3] was wrested from the Hindu chief of Chandwar, and made over to the Muslims who had held it before. The countries of the

1 Khor is modern Shamsabad in the Farrukhabad district in the United Provinces situated on the south bank of the Buri Ganga river, 18 miles north-west of Fatehgarh town. Farrukhabad Distt. Gaz., pp. 123-24.

2 Sakit lies between Kampila and Rapari, 12 miles south-east of Etah town. It was at Badoli in this *pargana* that Bahlol Lodi died on his return from an expedition against Gwalior.

3 Jalesar is 38 miles east of Muttra in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

Doab, Biyana and Gwalior broke out into rebellion again and again, but order was restored, and the chiefs were compelled to acknowledge the authority of Delhi.

Having restored order in the Doab, Khizr Khan turned his attention to the affairs of the northern frontier. The rebellion of the Turk-bacchas at Sarhind was put down. Trouble broke out afresh in the Doab, but the leading Zamindars who stirred up strife were subdued. The Mewatis were also suppressed. The Sultan himself marched against the chiefs of Gwalior and Etawah who were reduced to obedience. On his return to Delhi, Khizr Khan fell ill and died on May 20, 1421 A.D.

Khizr Khan lived like a true Saiyyad. He never shed blood unnecessarily, nor did he ever sanction an atrocious crime either to increase his own power or to wreak vengeance upon his enemies. If there was little administrative reform, the fault was not his ; the disorders of the time gave him no rest, and all his life he was engaged in preserving the authority of the state in those parts where it still existed. Firishta passes a well-deserved eulogy upon him when he says : "Khizr Khan was a great and wise king, kind and true to his word ; his subjects loved him with a grateful affection so that great and small, master and servant, sat and mourned for him in black raiment till the third day, when they laid aside their mourning garments, and raised his son Mubarak Shah to the throne."

Khizr Khan was succeeded by his son Mubarak who won the favour of the nobles by confirming them in their possessions.

Mubarak Shah, 1421—34.

The most remarkable thing about the history of this period is the widespread anarchy that prevailed in the country. As before, the Zamindars of the Doab revolted again, and the Sultan marched into Katehar in 1423 to enforce the payment of revenue. The Rathor Rajputs of Kampila and Etawah were subdued next, and Rai Sarwar's son offered fealty and paid the arrears of tribute.

The most important rebellions of the reign were two—of Jasrath Khokhar in 1428 and of Paulad Turk-baccha near Sarhind. The Khokhar chieftain suffered a severe defeat and fled into the mountains to seek refuge. Paulad was more defiant ; he offered a stubborn resistance and remained at bay for more than a year. It was after persistent and prolonged fighting that he was defeated and slain in November 1433.

In order to make the administration more efficient, the Sultan made certain changes in the distribution of the highest offices in the state. This gave offence to certain nobles who conspired to take his life. When the Sultan went to Mubarakabad, a new town which he had founded, to watch the progress of constructions on the 20th February, 1434, he was struck with a sword by the conspirators so that he instantaneously fell dead on the ground.

Mubarak was a kind and merciful king. The contemporary chronicler records his verdict with touching brevity in these words : 'A clement and generous sovereign, full of excellent qualities.'

After Mubarak's death Prince Muhammad, a grandson of Khizr Khan, came to the throne. He found it difficult to cope with the forces of disorder and rebellion. Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur seized several parganas belonging to Delhi, and the Rai of Gwalior along with several other Hindu chiefs ceased to pay tribute. Mahmud Khilji of Malwa advanced as far as the capital, but he soon retired after concluding a peace with Muhammad Shah, for his capital Mandu was threatened by Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. Bahlol Khan Lodi, the governor of Lahore and Sarhind, who had come to the rescue of Muhammad Shah, pursued the retreating Malwa army, and seized its baggage and effects. He was given the title of Khan-i-Khanan, and the Sultan signified his affection towards him by addressing him as his son. But Bahlol's loyalty was short-lived. When Alauddin Alam Shah came to the throne in 1445, the prestige

of the government declined further owing to his negligence and incompetence. Bahlol slowly gathered strength and derived full advantage from the weakness of the central power. In 1447 the Sultan betook himself to Badaon, which he made his permanent residence in the teeth of the opposition of the entire court and the minister. He committed a serious blunder in attempting to kill his Wazir, Hamid Khan, who thereupon invited Bahlol to come to the capital and assume sovereignty. With a traitorous party at the capital itself, it was not difficult for Bahlol to realise his old dream, and by a successful *coup d'etat* he seized Delhi. Alauddin Alam Shah voluntarily left to him the whole kingdom except his favourite district of Badaon. Bahlol removed the name of Alam Shah from the Khutba and publicly proclaimed himself ruler of Delhi.[4] The imbecile Alauddin retired to Badaon where he died in 1478.

Having obtained the throne, Bahlol proceeded with studied caution and feigned humility to secure Hamid's confidence.

Bahlol consolidates his power.

At first he treated him with great respect but soon grew jealous of his power and influence. In order to remove him from his path Bahlol had him arrested and thrown into prison.

[4] It is written in the *Tarikh-i-Ibrahim Shahi* and the *Tarikh-i-Nizami* that Malik Bahlol was a nephew of Sultan Shah Lodi who was appointed governor of Sarhind after the death of Mallu Iqbal with the title of Islam Khan. His brothers, among whom was Malik Kali, the father of Bahlol, also shared his prosperity. Malik Sultan, impressed by the talents of Bahlol, appointed him his successor, and after his death Bahlol became governor of Sarhind. Firishta writes that Islam Khan married his daughter to Bahlol, and notwithstanding the existence of his own sons he nominated Bahlol as his heir, because he was by far the ablest of all. But Qutb Khan, the son of Islam Khan, dissatisfied with this arrangement went to Delhi and complained against Bahlol to the Sultan. Hasan Khan was sent against Bahlol at the head of a considerable force, but he was worsted in battle.

An interesting anecdote is related of Bahlol, that one day when he was in the service of his uncle, he went to Zamana where he paid a

Though Bahlol's name was proclaimed in the Khutba, there were many malcontents who did not recognise his title to the throne. When the Sultan left for Sarhind to organise the North-West Provinces, they invited Mahmud Shah Sharqi to advance upon the capital. Mahmud marched at the head of a large army and laid siege to Delhi. On hearing of this disaster, Bahlol at once turned back and Mahmud withdrew to Jaunpur.

Reduces the provinces.

This victory over the Sharqi king made a profound impression upon friends and foes alike. At home, it strengthened his position and silenced the malicious detractors of the new dynasty ; abroad, it frightened into submission several provincial fief-holders and chieftains who had enjoyed varying degrees of local autonomy. The Sultan proceeded towards Mewat and received the willing homage of Ahmad Khan whom he deprived of seven parganas. The governor of Sambhal, who had taken part in the late war against the Sultan, was treated indulgently in spite of treason, and the only penalty inflicted upon him was the loss of seven parganas. At Kol Īsa Khan was allowed to keep his possessions intact, and similar treatment was accorded to Mubarak Khan, the governor of Sakīt, and Raja Pratap Singh who was confirmed in his possession of the districts of Mainpuri and Bhogaon. Etawah, Chandwar, and other districts of the Doab, which had caused so much trouble during the late règime, were also settled and made to acknowledge the authority of Delhi.

The rebellious governors of the Doab were subdued but

visit to Saiyyad Ayen, a famous *darvesh*, with his friends. The *darvesh* said : 'Is there any one who wishes to obtain from me the empire of Delhi for two thousand *tankas*? ' Bahlol instantly presented the sum to the holy man who accepted it with the words : 'Be the empire of Delhi blessed by thee.' The prophecy of the *darvesh* luckily proved true.

Dorn, Makhzan-i-Afghani, p. 43.

The Tarikh-i-Daudi has 1,300 *tankas* instead of 2,000.

Allahabad University MS., p. 3.

Bahlol was not yet free from danger. His most formidable enemy was the King of Jaunpur. At the instigation of his wife Mahmud Shah Sharqi made another attempt to seize Delhi, but peace was made through the mediation of certain nobles and the *status quo* was restored.

War against Jaunpur.

But the terms of the treaty were soon violated, and war with Jaunpur became a serious affair when Husain Shah succeeded to the Sharqi throne. Husain was a ruler of great ability and courage ; he was led by his courtiers to think that Bahlol was a usurper and a plebeian by birth, and that he himself had a valid title to the throne. He crossed the Jumna, but after some petty skirmishes in which the Jaunpur forces had the advantage, a truce was concluded, and the river Ganges was fixed as the boundary between the two kingdoms. Husain retreated to Jaunpur leaving his camp and baggage behind.

Bahlol soon broke the treaty and attacked the Jaunpur army on its return march. He seized Husain's baggage and captured his wife Malika Jahan. The Sultan treated his exalted captive with every mark of respect, and escorted her back with his Khwaja Sara to Jaunpur. War broke out again, and Husain was defeated in a battle near the Kalinadi by the Delhi forces. Bahlol marched to Jaunpur and obtained possession of it. Husain made another attempt to recover his kingdom, but he was defeated and expelled from Jaunpur. As the Sultan had little faith in the loyalty of the Afghan barons, he made over Jaunpur to his son Barbak Shah.

The conquest of Jaunpur considerably strengthened the hands of Bahlol, and he marched against the chiefs of Kalpi, Dholpur, Bari, and Alapur, who offered their submission.[5] An

[5] Kalpi is a city in the Jalaun district in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. Dholpur is a state between Agra and Gwalior. Bari is a town in the Dholpur State 19 miles west of Dholpur. Alapur is in the Gwalior State near Morena.

expedition was sent to chastise the rebellious chief of Gwalior, who was subdued and made to pay tribute. On his return from the expedition, the Sultan was attacked by fever and after a short illness died in 1488.

Bahlol's achievement.

As the founder of a new dynasty and the restorer of the waning prestige of the Delhi monarchy, Bahlol deserves a high place in history. In personal character he was far superior to his immediate predecessors ; brave, generous, humane and honest, he was devoted to his religion, and followed the letter of the law with the strictest fidelity. He was singularly free from ostentation ; he never sat upon the throne, bedecked with jewels and diamonds in gorgeous robes like other mediæval rulers, and used to say that it was enough for him that the world knew him to be a king without any display of royal splendour on his part. He was kind to the poor, and no beggar ever turned away disappointed from his gate. Though not a man of learning himself, he valued the society of learned men, and extended his patronage to them. His love of justice was so great that he used to hear personally the petitions of his subjects and grant redress. He kept no private treasure and ungrudgingly distributed the spoils of war among his troops. The author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* describes the character of Bahlol in these words :

> "In his social meetings he never sat on a throne, and would not allow his nobles to stand ; and even during public audiences he did not occupy the throne, but seated himself upon a carpet. Whenever he wrote a *firman* to his nobles, he addressed them as *Masnad ʻĀli* ; and if at any time they were displeased with him, he tried so hard to pacify them that he would himself go to their houses, ungird his sword from his waist, and place it before the offended party ; nay, he would sometimes even take off

his turban from his head and solicit forgiveness, saying: 'If you think me unworthy of the station I occupy, choose some one else, and bestow on me some other office.' He maintained a brotherly intercourse with all his chiefs and soldiers. If any one was ill, he would himself go and attend on him."

After Bahlol's death, his son Nizam Khan was elevated to the throne under the title of Sikandar Shah by the Amirs and nobles, though not without a dissentient vote. While the question of succession was being mooted by the principal nobles and officers of state, the name of Bārbak Shah was suggested, but as he was far away, the proposal was rejected; after some heated discussion among the nobles, the choice fell upon Nizam Khan mainly through the help of Khan-i-Jahan and Khan-i-Khanan Farmuli.

Sikandar's accession to the throne.

Sikandar addressed himself to the task of organising the government with great energy and vigour. The first to feel the force of his arms was his brother Bārbak Shah who had assumed the title of king. He was defeated and taken prisoner, and the country was entrusted to the Afghan nobles.

War with Jaunpur.

The Zamindars of Jaunpur sent word to Husain Sharqi to make once more a bold bid for his ancestral dominions. At the head of a large army he marched to the field of battle, but he was defeated near Benares, and his army was put to flight. Husain Shah fled towards Lakhnauti where he passed the remainder of his life in obscurity. With his defeat, the independent Kingdom of Jaunpur ceased to exist. The whole country was easily subdued, and the Sultan appointed his own officers to carry on the government.

Sikandar next turned his attention to the Afghan chiefs who held large jagirs. The accounts of some of the leading Afghan

officers were inspected by the Sultan, and there were startling disclosures. This policy greatly offended them because they looked upon audit and inspection as an encroachment upon their privileges. The king's attempts to suppress them with a high hand led them to form a conspiracy against him, and having finished their nefarious plans, they induced Prince Fatah Khan, the king's brother, to join them. But the prince, realising the dangerous consequences of his conduct, divulged the whole plot to the Sultan who inflicted severe punishments on the wrong-doers.

Against the Afghans.

Experience had impressed upon the Sultan the necessity of making the place where the city of Agra now stands the headquarters of the army so that he might be able to exercise more effective control over the fief-holders of Etawah, Biyana, Kol, Gwalior and Dholpur. With this object in view, he laid the foundations of a new town on the site where the modern city of Agra stands in 1504 A.D. A splendid town gradually rose upon the chosen spot, and afterwards the Sultan also took up his residence there.

Foundation of Agra.

Next year (911 A.H. = 1505 A.D.) a violent earthquake occurred at Agra, which shook the earth to its foundations, and levelled many beautiful buildings and houses to the ground. The chronicler of the reign writes that, 'it was in fact so terrible, that mountains were overturned, and all lofty edifices dashed to the ground: the living thought, the day of judgment was come; and the dead, the day of resurrection.' No such earthquake had occurred before and the loss of life was appallingly heavy.

Earthquake at Agra.

The remaining years of Sikandar's life were spent in suppressing Rajput revolts and the attempts of provincial governors to establish independent kingdoms of their own. Dholpur, Gwalior and Narwar were subdued, and their chiefs were compelled

The last year of the reign.

to pay homage to the Sultan. The prince of Chanderi also submitted, and though allowed to retain nominal possession of the city, the administration was entrusted to the leading Afghan officers.

The last expedition was undertaken by the Sultan to secure the fortress of Ranthambhor which was entrusted to a nobleman who held it as a vassal of Delhi. The prince of Gwalior rebelled again. The Sultan put his forces in order, but in the midst of these preparations he fell ill and died on December 1, 1517 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodi.

Sikandar was the ablest ruler of the Lodi dynasty. He kept the Afghan barons in check and strictly enforced his orders. He ordered an examination of the accounts of Afghan governors and fief-holders, and punished those who were found guilty of embezzlement. The provincial governors feared him and loyally carried out his orders. The Sultan took special care to protect the interests of the poor. He abolished the corn duties and took steps to encourage agriculture. The roads were cleared of robbers, and the Zamindars who had been notorious for their lawless habits were sternly put down. The author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* writes of Sikandar's administration :

Administration.

> " The Sultan daily received an account of the prices of all things and an account of what had happened in the different districts of the empire. If he perceived the slightest appearance of anything wrong, he caused instant inquiries to be made about it . . . . In his reign, business was carried on in a peaceful, honest, straightforward way. The study of *belles lettres* was not neglected . . . . Factory establishments were so encouraged that all the young nobles and soldiers were engaged in useful works . . . . All the nobles and soldiers of Sikandar were satisfied : each of his chiefs was appointed to the government of a district, and it was his especial desire to gain the goodwill

and affections of the body of the people. For the sake of his officers and troops he put an end to war and dispute with the other monarchs and nobles of the period, and closed the road to contention and strife. He contented himself with the territory bequeathed him by his father, and passed the whole of his life in this greatest safety and enjoyment, and gained the hearts of high and low."

Sikandar was a man of handsome appearance, fond of chase, and well-versed in the accomplishments suited to men of his rank. He was intensely religious, and allowed himself to be guided and dominated by the *ulama* in every detail of government. He persecuted the Hindus and desired to banish idolatry from the land. So great was his zeal for the faith that he once ordered the temples of Mathurā to be destroyed, and *sarais* and mosques to be built in their stead. The Hindus were not allowed to bathe at the ghats on the bank of the Jumna, and an order was passed prohibiting barbers from shaving the heads and beards of the Hindus in accordance with their religious customs.

Character of Sikandar.

The Sultan loved justice. He listened to the complaints of the poor himself and tried to redress them. He kept himself informed of everything that happened in his empire. The market was properly controlled, and all cases of fraud or deceit were reported to the Sultan.

The Sultan was well-known for his sobriety and wisdom. He never allowed men of dissolute character to come near him. Himself a man of literary tastes, he extended his patronage to learned men, and often invited them to his palace to listen to their discourses.

During his lifetime Sikandar maintained order by his firm policy and held the turbulent barons in check, but after his death when the crown passed to a man, who was inferior to

him in ability and character, the forces which he had controlled broke loose and undermined the foundations of the empire.

The character of the Afghan government.

The character of the Afghan government changed under Ibrahim. He was a man of headstrong and irritable temper, who by his insolence and *hauteur* alienated the sympathies of the Afghan nobles. The Afghans looked upon their king as a comrade and not as a master and willingly accorded to him the honours of a feudal superior. Men of the Lohani, Farmuli and Lodi tribes held important offices in the state. They had always been turbulent and factious ; and their position and influence had enabled them to form conspiracies against the crown. Their loyalty to their king fluctuated according to the strength or weakness of the latter. Sikandar had kept them under firm control, and severely punished them when they flouted his authority. But when Ibrahim attempted to put down their individualistic tendencies with a high hand in order to make his government strong and efficient, they protested and offered resistance. As Erskine observes, the principal fief-holders looked upon their jagirs 'as their own of right, and purchased by their swords rather than as due to any bounty or liberality on the part of the sovereign.' Ibrahim was confronted with a difficult situation. The territory of the empire had increased in extent ; the feudal aristocracy had become ungovernable ; and the elements of discontent, which had accumulated for years silently beneath the surface, began to assert themselves. The Hindus, dissatisfied with Sikandar's policy of religious persecution, heartily hated the alien government which offended against their most cherished prejudices. The problem before Ibrahim was somewhat similar to that which confronted the Tudors in England towards the close of the fifteenth century. But he lacked that tact, foresight and strength of will which enabled Henry VII to put down with a high hand the overweening feudal aristocracy which tended to

encroach upon the royal domain. His drastic measures provoked the resentment of the half-loyal nobility and paved the way for the disruption of the Afghan empire. But Ibrahim is not wholly to blame. The break-up of the empire was bound to come sooner or later, for even if Ibrahim had kept the nobles attached to himself, they would have tried to set up small principalities for themselves, and reduced him to the position of a titular king, a mere figurehead in the midst of warring factions and cliques.

Cheapness of prices.

Though Ibrahim was jealous of the influence of the barons and tried to crush them with a high hand, he never neglected the interests of the people. During his reign, the crops were abundant, and the prices of all articles of ordinary use were incredibly low. The Sultan took grain in payment of rent, and all the fief-holders and nobles were asked to accept payments in kind. No scarcity of grain was ever felt, and the author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* writes that a respectable man's services could be obtained for five *tankās* a month, and a man could travel from Delhi to Agra on one Bahloli which was sufficient to maintain himself, his horse and his small escort during the journey.

Prince Jalal's revolt.

As has been said above, Ibrahim had by his indiscriminate severity alienated the sympathies of the Lodi Amirs, who conspired soon after his accession to place his brother Prince Jalal upon the throne of Jaunpur. In pursuance of this plan, the prince marched from Kalpi and assumed charge of the government of Jaunpur. But this arrangement was highly disapproved by Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, one of the most high-minded Amirs of Sikandar. He sharply reprimanded the nobles for their impolitic conduct, and pointed out the dangers of a dual sovereignty to the empire. The Afghan nobles acknowledged their mistake, and tried to persuade Prince Jalal to withdraw from Jaunpur, but he refused to do so. Negotiations having

failed, Ibrahim issued a *farman* in which he ordered the Amirs not to pay any heed to Jalal's authority and threatened them with severe punishments, if they failed to comply with the royal mandate. The more influential among the Amirs were conciliated by gifts and presents, and were detached from Prince Jalal. Deprived of this support, he allied himself with the Zamindars, and with their help improved the condition of his army. Ibrahim confined all his brothers in the fort of Hansi, and himself marched against Jalal, whose strength was considerably diminished by the desertion of Azam Humayun, his principal supporter. Kalpi was besieged; the contest was carried on with great vigour for some time, and the fort was dismantled. Jalal fled towards Agra where the governor opened negotiations with him, and offered him the undisturbed possession of Kalpi, if he waived all claims to sovereignty. When Ibrahim came to know of this treaty which was concluded without his consent, he disapproved of it, and issued orders for the assassination of the rebellious prince. Jalal fled to the Raja of Gwalior for protection.

Having set the affairs of the capital in order, Ibrahim sent his forces to reduce the fort of Gwalior. Jalal fled towards Malwa but he was captured by the Zamindars of Gondwana, who sent him in chains to Ibrahim. The Prince was conveyed to Hansi, but on his way to that abode of misery he was assassinated by the Sultan's orders.

Against Azam Humayun.

The Sultan dismissed Azam Humayun from command and deprived his son Islam Khan of the governorship of Kara Manikpur. His disgrace alarmed the other nobles, who joined his banner and incited him to raise the standard of rebellion. So great was the discontent caused by Ibrahim's policy that in a short time the rebels collected a large army which consisted of 40,000 cavalry, 500 elephants and a large body of infantry, while the royal forces numbered only 50,000. A desperate fight raged

between the royalists and the rebels of which a graphic account is given by the author of the *Makhzan-i-Afghani*.

"Dead bodies, heap upon heap, covered the field ; and the number of heads lying upon the ground is beyond the reach of recollection. Streams of blood ran over the plain ; and whenever for a length of time, a fierce battle took place in Hindustan, the old men always observed that with this battle no other one was comparable ; brothers fighting against brothers, fathers against sons, inflamed by mutual shame and innate bravery ; bows and arrows were laid aside, and the carnage carried on with daggers, swords, knives and javelins." At last, Islam Khan lay dead on the field of battle ; Said Khan was captured, and the rebels were defeated with heavy losses.

Ibrahim and the Afghan barons.

Ibrahim now tried to destroy the feudal chieftains in his empire in order to strengthen his position, but the attempt recoiled on himself and led to his ruin. The cruel treatment he meted out to them has already been mentioned. The veteran Mian Bhua had fallen a victim to his wrath, and Azam Humayun had been treacherously assassinated in prison. Even the greatest barons trembled for their safety, and Dariya Khan, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, and Husain Khan Farmuli, fearing lest a similar fate should overtake them, broke out into open rebellion. Husain Khan Farmuli was assassinated in his bed by some holy men of Chanderi, and his tragic death made the Afghan nobles bitterly hostile to the Sultan and convinced them of his perfidious designs. Dariya Khan's son, Bahadur Khan, assumed the title of Muhammad Shah, struck coins in his name, and collected a large force with which he successfully resisted the attempts of the Sultan to crush him. The baronial discontent reached its climax when Ibrahim cruelly treated the son of Daulat Khan Lodi. The latter was summoned to the court, but he excused himself on the ground that he would come later with the treasure of the state, and sent his

son Dilawar Khan to avert the wrath of the Sultan. He was taken to the prison where he was shown the victims of royal caprice, suspended from the walls. To the young Afghan who trembled with fear at this awful spectacle, the Sultan observed: "Have you seen the condition of those who have disobeyed me?" Dilawar Khan, who understood the warning these ominous words conveyed, bowed his head in profound submission, and quietly escaped to his father to whom he communicated all that he had seen at the capital. Alarmed for his safety, Daulat Khan addressed through his son Dilawar Khan an invitation to Babar, the ruler of Kabul, to invade Hindustan. The story of Babar's conquest of Hindustan will be related in another chapter.

CHAPTER X

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The Islamic States.

The Muslim State in India, as elsewhere, was a theocracy. The king was Cæsar and Pope combined in one, but his authority in religious matters was strictly limited by the Holy Law. "He is the shadow of God upon earth to whose refuge we are to fly when oppressed by injury from the unforeseen occurrence of life." But he is merely to carry out God's will, and the civil law which he administers is to be subordinated to the canon law. In such a state naturally, the priestly class will have a powerful voice. The Muslim kings of Hindustan were sovereign in their own person; they struck coins and caused the Khutba to be read in their names, though some of them invoked the Khalifa's aid to cement their title as was done by Īltutmish, Muhammad Tughluq, and Firuz Tughluq. The state rested upon the support of the military class which consisted exclusively of the followers of the faith. Their fanaticism was stirred up by the *'Ulama* who impressed upon them the duty of fighting under the sacred banner by telling them that death on the field of battle will be rewarded with the honours of martyrdom. Apart from the love of adventure and the hope of material advantage, the prospect of posthumous canonisation in case they died in battle led many an ardent spirit to risk his life in the cause. The *'Ulama* naturally came to possess enormous influence in such a state. The extirpation of idolatry, the extinction of every form of dissent from the accepted dogma, the conversion of the infidel population—these came to be looked upon as the functions of an ideal Muslim state. Most of the Muslim rulers attempted to conform to this ideal of the orthodox canonists according

to their lights and opportunities. Those who tried to meet their wishes were praised lavishly by historians who were mostly members of the class of *'Ulema.* But among the earlier kings in India Alauddin struck a new line. Like Akbar after him, he was opposed to the interference of the *Ulama* in matters of state. His political theory is clearly set forth in the words which he addressed to Qazi Mughis, whom he consulted about the legal position of the sovereign in the state. Fully aware of the evils of a church-ridden monarchy, he enunciated a new doctrine of sovereignty and claimed to be " God's vicar in things temporal, as is the priest in things spiritual." The people acquiesced in this doctrine, merely because the political situation of the time needed a strong man at the helm of the state, who would repel the Mongol attacks and keep order at home. Muhammad Tughluq's rationalism on which Barani pours his cold scorn brought about a war between him and the *'Ulama* with the result that the latter conspired against him and thwarted all his plans. Under his weak successor they easily gained the upper hand, and persuaded him to adjust the institutions of the state in accordance with the principles laid down in the Quran. The taxes were reduced to the number prescribed in the Law; and the official agency was freely used to put down heresy and infidelity. After the period of anarchy which followed the death of Firuz, when the empire regained a settled form, the *'Ulama* recovered their ascendancy ; and under Sikandar Lodi a campaign of bitter persecution was revived against the Hindus. On the whole, during this period the *'Ulama* continued to exercise much influence on political affairs. Indeed, it required an extraordinary strength of will to discard their advice and follow a line of action in opposition to the traditions and dogmas of the orthodox church. That the influence of the priestly order was injurious to the interests of the state cannot be denied.

The state imposed great disabilities upon the non-Muslims. Forcible conversions were ordered, but they were neither frequent nor systematic owing to the pressure of war and the recurrence of Mongol raids, which often compelled the suspension of all other activities of the administration. The non-Muslims, technically called the *Zimmis*[1] had to pay a poll-tax called the *Jeziya* for the protection of their lives and property. It was a sort of commutation money which they had to pay in lieu of military service. Humility and submissiveness are mentioned as their duties in the sacred law. But the Quran says, 'Let there be no compulsion in religion. Wilt thou compel men to become believers? No soul can believe, but by the persuasion of God.'

It may be conceded at once that the Prophet forbade conversion by force and enjoined preaching and persuasion as the sole method of propagating the faith but his commands were not carried out by his zealous followers. Instances are not rare in which the non-Muslims were treated with great severity. They were not allowed to enlist in the army even if they wished to do so. The practice of their religious rites even with the slightest publicity was not allowed, and cases are on record of

1 According to the Hanafi doctors *Jeziyā* is paid by the *Zimmis* as a compensation for being spared from death. By the payment of the *Jeziyā* the non-Muslims purchase their lives and escape death. Aghnides, Muhammadan Theories of Finance, LXX, pp. 398, 407. This may not be accepted on all hands. Many people now think that the *Jeziyā* was a military tax levied upon the *Zimmis*.

The capitation-tax which is levied by a Muslim ruler upon subjects who are of different faith, but claim protection (*aman*) is founded upon a direct injunction of the Quran :—

"Make war upon such of those to whom the scriptures have been given as believe not in God or in the last day, and forbid not that which God and his apostles have forbidden, and who profess not the profession of truth, until they pay tribute out of their hand and they be humbled."

Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, p. 248.

men who lost their lives for doing so. Some of these kings were so bigoted that they did not allow any new temple to be built or an old one to be repaired. There were others like Sikandar Lodi who were so intolerant of idolatry as to order a wholesale demolition of temples. Toleration under Muslim domination in India in the early middle ages was not the rule but the exception. A liberal-minded ruler like Muhammad Tughluq would be traduced and condemned by the *'Ulama* and charged with bartering away the honour of Islam. What the orthodox party wanted was conformity to their interpretation of the law, no matter what the consequences might be.

Effect on the people.

The Islamic state fostered luxury among the members of the ruling class. The highest offices in the state were held by Muslims, and elevation to positions of honour was generally determined by royal will and not by merit. The easy acquisition of wealth and the participation in the festivities of the court led to great vices, and the Muslims towards the close of the fourteenth century lost their old vigour and manliness. The early Muslims who served Iltutmish, Balban, and Alauddin were soldier-martyrs who cheerfully braved risks for the glory of Islam, but their descendants who had no inducement to work degenerated into mediocres, who had neither the ability nor the enthusiasm of their ancestors. The partiality of the state towards them destroyed their spirit of independence, and the large *Khanqahs* or charity establishments reduced them to the position of the hangers-on of the state, utterly devoid of self-respect, energy, or initiative. As the Muslims were few in number, they escaped the rough toil which was the inevitable lot of the average non-Muslim husbandman. They held land and paid only one-tenth as tax (*ashr*) to the state, and could thus enjoy a degree of affluence to which non-Muslims in the empire could never aspire. The effects of Muslim domination upon the Hindus were of a different kind. They fretted

and chafed against the disabilities imposed upon them. They were overtaxed and Zia Barani writes that Alauddin took from the Hindus of the Doab 50 per cent of their produce. They had no inducement to accumulate wealth, and the bulk of them led a life of poverty, want and struggle, earning just sufficient to maintain themselves and their family. The standard of living among the subject classes was low, and the incidence of taxation fell mainly upon them. They were excluded from high offices, and in such circumstances of distrust and humiliation, the Hindus never got an opportunity of developing their political genius to its fullest extent.

Social condition.

The Muslims were the favoured children of the state. As everything depended upon their valour and strength, the state accorded to them a preferential treatment. From time to time concessions had to be made to their religious demands by the state, and their interests had to be consulted before all others. Social distinctions prevailed among the Muslims, and some of the kings never appointed any but men of noble birth to high offices. Balban, who was highly punctilious in observing the etiquette of the court, never encouraged upstarts, and on one occasion refused a large gift from a man of low origin who had amassed a fortune by means of usury and monopolies. Wine-drinking and gambling seem to have been the common vices in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Balban issued an edict prohibiting the use of liquor, and the example of his son Muhammad, who drank wine with moderation and never encouraged any kind of foolish talk in his presence, had a salutary effect upon the manners and morals of the society which gathered round him at Lahore. Alauddin also adopted drastic measures to combat the evil of drink, and forbade gambling and all kinds of social intercourse among the nobles. As long as he lived, he strictly enforced his rules, but after his death the usual laxity prevailed. A small band

of the old Alai nobles wondered at the depravity of Qutb-ud-din Mubarak's court; and Barani writes that the price of a boy, or handsome eunuch, or beautiful girl varied from 500 to 1,000 and 2,000 *tankās*. But the social tastes improved considerably under Tughluq Shah and his illustrious son Muhammad Tughluq, both of whom were free from the grosser vices of the age. The character of the state did not wholly deteriorate even under Firuz Tughluq, though its military vigour declined and, barring a few exceptions, mediocrity took the place of genius in all departments of the administration. The pomp and magnificence of the state was fully maintained, and 'Afif tells us that on every Friday after public service, musicians, athletes, story-tellers, numbering about two or three thousand used to assemble in the palace and entertain the populace with their performances. Slavery was common, and slaves of ability like Khan-i-Jahan Maqbūl could rise to the highest position in the state. As wealth increased in Muslim society, the hold of religion became somewhat weaker, and superstition and ignorance began to gain ground. Firuz in his *Fatūhāt-i-Firuz Shahi* speaks of a number of heretical sects which he suppressed with a high hand, and the leaders of which he caused to be imprisoned, or put to death. The liberty of women was restricted ; they were not allowed to go to visit the tombs of holy men outside the city, and Firuz showed his intolerance by prescribing drastic penalties against those women who disobeyed his edict.

The Hindus had become degenerate with the loss of political power. They were looked upon as the worst enemies of the government that had been set up in their midst. With rare exceptions, they were invariably excluded from high offices, and toleration was granted to them only on condition of paying the *Jeziya*. During the reign of Alauddin the Hindus of the Doab were treated with severity. Qazi Mughis-ud-din's opinion about the position of the Hindus in a Muslim

state, which has been explained in a previous chapter, was the view of the average mediæval canonist and was acted upon by Muslim rulers in normal circumstances. Barani writes that no Hindu could hold up his head ; and in their houses no sign of gold or silver *tankās* or *jitals* was to be seen ; and *chowdharis* and *khuts* had not means enough to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel. So great was the destitution of these people, writes the same authority, that their wives went to serve in the houses of the Muslims. The state encouraged conversions, and in describing the reign of Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah Ibn Batūtā writes that when a Hindu wished to become a Muslim, he was brought before the Sultan who gave him rich robes and bangles of gold. The orthodox party had such a great aversion for the Hindus that Barani on seeing their slightly improved condition under Qutb-ud-din Mubarak Shah, which was due partly to the relaxation of the rules of Alauddin and partly to the pro-Hindu policy of Khusrau, laments that the "Hindus again found pleasure and happiness and were beside themselves with joy." There was no active persecution under the first two Tughluqs, but Firuz reversed the policy of his predecessors. He crowned his policy of bigotry by levying the *Jeziya* upon the Brahmans, who had hitherto been exempt. When the Brahmans remonstrated against this step, the Sultan reduced the scale of assessment but retained the tax. The Hindus profited much by the disorders that followed the death of Firuz, but when the Lodis established their power, they were again persecuted by Sikandar, and although there was no economic distress, they had to live like helots within the empire.

Ibn Batūtā has given us an interesting picture of India in the fourteenth century, and from his narrative we learn a great deal about the social customs and manners of the time. The learned class had lost its prestige, and Muhammad Tughluq,

who was terribly stern in administering justice, freely punished Shaikhs and Maulvis for their misconduct. Slavery was common, but the state encouraged the practice of manumission.[2] To keep slave girls was a recognised fashion of the time, and Badr-i-Chach, the famous poet, had to offer on one occasion 900 *dinars* for a beautiful and accomplished girl. The traveller praises the hospitality of the Hindus, and observes that caste rules were strictly observed. The Hindus were treated as inferior to the Muslims. When a Hindu came to offer his presents to the Sultan in the *Durbar*, the Hājibs shouted out '*Hadāk Allah*' or 'may God bring you to the right path.' Moral offences were severely punished, and even members of the royal family were dealt with like ordinary men. Prince Masud's mother was stoned to death in accordance with the law for committing adultery. The use of wine was interdicted, and the author of the *Masālik-al-absār* writes that the inhabitants of India have little taste for wine and content themselves with betel leaves.[3] The same authority says, the people love to hoard money, and whenever a man is asked about the extent of his property, he replies: "I do not know, but I am the second or third of my family who has laboured to increase the treasure which an ancestor deposited in a certain cavern, or in certain holes, and I do not know how much it amounts to."[4] Men buried their wealth, as they do even now, and accepted nothing but coined money in their daily transactions. Ibn Batūtā has given an interesting account of the law of debt as it prevailed in the fourteenth century, and he is supported

[2] Ibn Batūtā, III, p. 236.

[3] Masālik, Elliot, III, p. 581.

[4] Masālik, Elliot, III, p. 584.

Moreland, India at the Death of Akbar, p. 284.

He says, the accumulation of large hoards was essentially a feature of Hindu civilisation.

by Marco Polo who visited India before him. The creditors resorted to the court to seek the king's protection in order to recover their money. When a big Amir was in debt, the creditor blocked his way to the royal palace and shouted in order to implore the Sultan's help. The debtor in this awkward situation either paid or made a promise to pay at some future date. Sometimes the Sultan himself interfered and enforced payments.[5] The practice of *Satī* and self-destruction was in vogue, but no woman could become a *Satī* without obtaining the king's permission.[6] Riding on an ass was looked upon with contempt as it is today, and a man was flogged and paraded on an ass when he was punished for some offence proved against him.[7] Men believed in witchcraft, magic and miracles as they did in mediæval Europe, and the performances of the Hindu ascetics called *Jogis* by Ibn Batūtā were witnessed even by the Sultan. Charity was practised on a large scale, and men endowed large *khanqahs* (charity-houses) where food was distributed gratis to the poor. Though the Sultan's purity of character had a wholesome effect on Muslim society, it does not appear that the sanctity of the marriage tie was always recognised. A man like Ibn Batūtā married more than four times in a most irresponsible manner and abandoned his wives one after another.[8] The education of women was not altogether neglected, and the traveller writes that when he reached Hanaur, he found there 13 schools for girls and 23 for boys—a thing which agreeably surprised him.

5 Ibn Batūtā, III, p. 411.

Yule, Marco Polo, II, pp. 279-80.

6 Ibn Batūtā, III, pp. 137—39.

Men drowned themselves in the Ganges and looked upon it as an act of piety. This was called *Jal Samādhi.*

7 Ibn Batūtā, III, p. 441.

8 Ibid., III, pp. 337-38.

The customs and manners of the people of the Deccan were in many respects different from those of the north. The customs of self-immolation and *Satī* prevailed, and numerous stone obelisks are still found commemorating the latter practice. The Brahmans were treated with special respect, and the *Guru* was held in high esteem. The dues payable by Brahmans were touched and remitted. Polyandry prevailed among the Nairs of Malabar and excited no scandal. From Ibn Batūtā's account it appears that punishments were extremely severe in Malabar even for the most trivial offences. A man was sometimes punished with death even for stealing a cocoanut.

Economic condition.

During the early days of the Muslim conquest the inhabitants of India were robbed of their wealth by the Muslim invaders, and Firishta has mentioned the vast booty which was carried off by Mahmūd of Ghazni from this country. The early Muslim rulers were occupied too much with conquest. Balban was the first ruler who paid attention to the maintenance of internal peace and order. He cleared the neighbourhood of Kampila and Patiali of robbers and highwaymen so that cultivation flourished, and merchants could take their goods from one place to another without much difficulty.[9] Under the Khiljis the economic conditions radically changed. They have been mentioned in a previous chapter. A famine occurred in Firuz's reign, and Barani writes that grain in Delhi rose to a *jital* per *sir*. The appalling hardship caused by the scarcity of food and fodder was so great in the Siwalik hills, that the Hindus of that country came to Delhi with their families, and twenty or thirty of them drowned themselves in the Jumna, when they found life unbearable.[10] But it does not appear that the administration exerted itself to mitigate

9 Elliot, III, p. 105.

10 Barani, p. 212.

human suffering. The next ruler, the greatest of the line, was a daring political economist and a bold tariff-legislator. His ambition of world-conquest led him to build up an economic system which is one of the marvels of mediæval statesmanship. There was no scarcity of wealth in the country, and Alauddin's state entry into Delhi soon after his accession was marked by the distribution of rich gifts among the people. Five *mans* of gold stars were placed in a *majniq* and were discharged upon the spectators who had thronged in front of the royal canopy.[11] The revenue system was thoroughly organised, and the distant provinces in the empire were correctly surveyed and assessed. The *khuts, chowdhris* and *muqaddams* were reduced to a state of abject poverty, and Barani expresses great satisfaction at their miserable condition. The most remarkable achievement, however, of Alauddin was his tariff-legislation. The prices were so low that a soldier with one horse could live comfortably with 234 *tankās* a year, *i.e.*, less than twenty *tankās* per mensem, which will barely suffice to meet even the cost of a horse in these days. Grain was stored in royal granaries and was sold to the people at low rates in times of scarcity. Ibn Batūtā relates that he witnessed with his own eyes in Delhi rice which had been stored in the cellars of Alauddin. The economic system of Alauddin collapsed after his death, for it rested upon a complete disregard of the laws of political economy. The reaction began after his death. The *bazar* people rejoiced and sold their goods at their own price. The tariff laws fell into disuse, and Barani laments the disappearance of cheap prices ; but there was no deficiency of crops, and the state never experienced any financial breakdown. Nāsir-ud-din Khusrau squandered the treasures of the state in order to win adherents from among the nobles, and yet Muhammad Tughluq found sufficient money to enable him

11 Barani, p. 245.

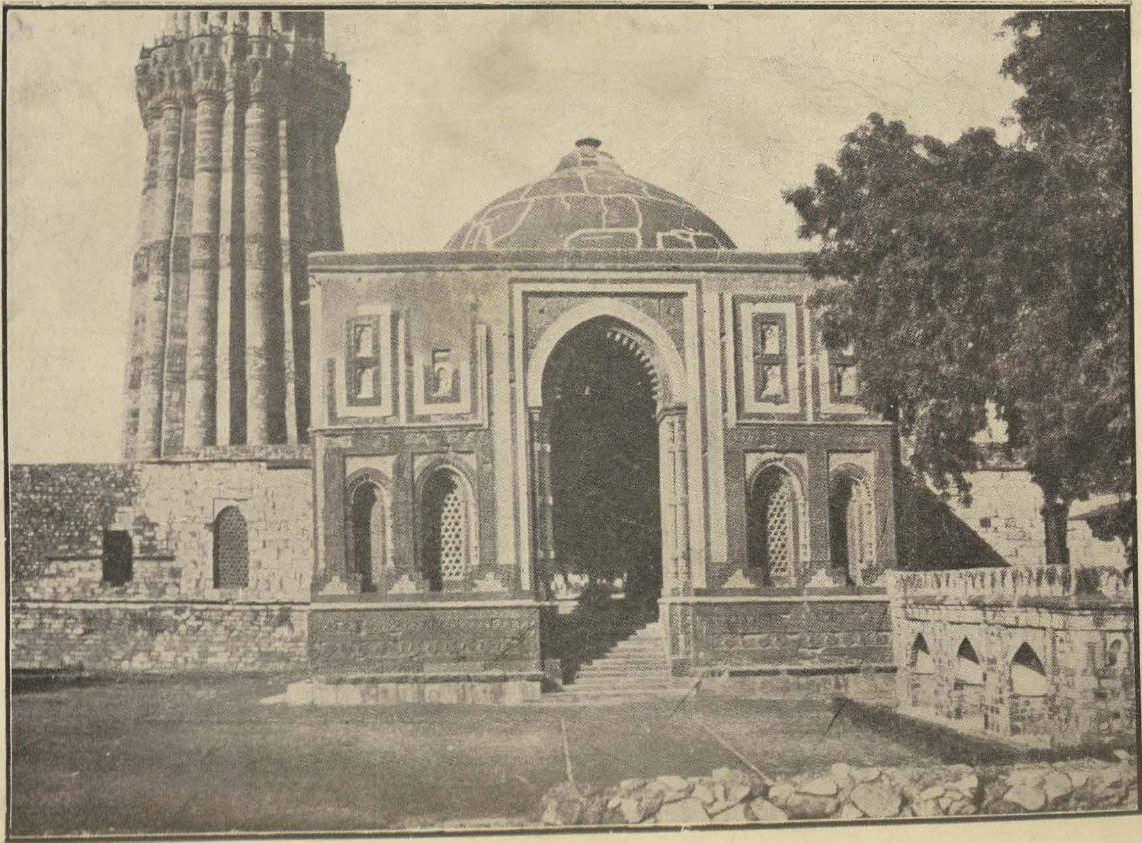
to embark upon costly experiments. Muhammad's economic measures failed disastrously, but his financial position remained unshaken. The failure of the token currency did not affect the stability of the state or destroy its credit, for the Sultan at once repealed his edict and permitted the people to exchange gold and silver coins for those of copper. For about a decade, famine stalked the land and reduced the people to a state of utter helplessness. A vigorous famine policy was adopted by the administration, and Barani writes that in two years about 70 lakhs of *tankās* were advanced as *Sondhar* or *Taqāvī* to the agriculturists. Ibn Batūtā dwells at length upon the Sultan's famine policy and says that grain was supplied from the royal stores, and the *faqias* and *qazis* were required to make lists of needy men in each parish, which were submitted to the Sultan for orders. On another occasion when dire distress prevailed, the Qazis, clerks, and Amirs, went from parish to parish, and gave relief to the famine-stricken people at the rate of one and a half western *ritals* per day. Large *khanqahs* assisted the state in administering relief, and Ibn Batūtā writes that hundreds of men were fed at the *khanqahs* of Qutb-ud-din, of which he was the *mutwalli,* and which contained a staff of 460 men. The state gave liberal encouragement to industry. There was a state manufactory in which 400 silk weavers were employed, and stuff of all kinds was prepared. There were also 500 manufacturers of golden tissues in the service of the Sultan, who wove gold brocades for the royal household and the nobility. Trade was carried on with foreign countries ; and Marco Polo and Ibn Batūtā both speak of ports which were visited by merchants from foreign countries. Broach and Calicut were famous centres of trade, and Ibn Batūtā says of the latter that merchants from all parts of the world came there to buy goods.

The trade conditions were favourable in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Wassāf describes Gujarat as a rich and

John Marshall describes with clearness the process of fusion in these words :—

> "Thus, a characteristic feature of many Hindu temples, as well as of almost every Muslim mosque—a feature derived from the traditional dwelling house of the East and as familiar in India as in other parts of Asia—was the open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, and such temples as were built on this plan naturally lent themselves to conversion into mosques and would be the first to be adopted for that purpose by the conquerors. Again, a fundamental characteristic that supplied a common link between the two styles was the fact that both Islamic and Hindu art were inherently decorative. Ornament was as vital to the one as to the other; both were dependent on it for their very being."

The Arabs reared no buildings, but they appreciated Hindu culture and admired the skill of the Indian architects and craftsmen. Mahmud of Ghazni was so struck with the skill of Hindu architects that he carried to Ghazni thousands of masons and artisans whom he employed in building the famous mosque known as the 'celestial bride.' He was followed by other warriors of Islam like Muhammad of Ghor and his gallant slaves Qutb-ud-din and Īltutmish who accomplished the conquest of Northern India during the years 1193—1236 A.D. The principal monuments erected during the reigns of Qutb-ud-din and Īltutmish were the mosque at Ajmer, the Qutb mosque and Minar at Delhi and certain buildings at Badaon. Hindu craftsmen were employed to construct these buildings, and the influence of Hindu architecture is still traceable in them. The most striking thing in the Qutb mosque is the screen of eleven pointed arches of which Fergusson speaks in terms of great admiration. The Qutb



Alai Darwaza, Delhi

Minar was begun by Qutb-ud-din who built the first storey but it was finally completed by Īltutmish. It was named after the famous saint Qutb-ud-din who is popularly known as Qutb Shah. It is nearly 242 feet high, and is still looked upon as a great work of art. The minar was struck by lightning in the time of Firuz Tughluq who ordered the fourth storey to be dismantled, and replaced by two smaller storeys as is shown by an inscription of the same king. In 1503 the upper storeys were again repaired by Sikandar Lodi. The *Adhai Din Kā Jhonparā* at Ajmer built by Qutb-ud-din was beautified by Īltutmish with a screen which still exists. The story that it was constructed in two and a half days seems to be a myth, for no amount of skill or industry could have reared a building of this kind in such a short time. Probably the name dates from the Maratha times when an annual fair was held there which lasted for two and a half days. Other notable buildings of this period are the *Hauz-i-Shamshi* and the *Shamsi Īdgah* built by Īltutmish during his governorship of Badaon (1203—9) and the *Jam-i-masjid* which was built in 1223 twelve years after his accession to the throne.

Under Alauddin Khilji the power of the Sultanate of Delhi increased enormously. Though his time was largely spent in wars, he ordered the construction of several forts, tanks, and palaces. The fort of Siri was built by him near a village of the same name at a distance of two miles to the north-east of Qila Rai Pithaura. The walls of the fort were built of stone and masonry, and its fortifications were extremely strong. The palace of *Hazār Sitūn* (or thousand pillars) was built by Alauddin, and Barani writes that the heads of thousands of Mughals were buried in the foundations and walls of this magnificent building. The Alai Darwaza which was built in 1311 is ' one of the most treasured gems of Islamic architecture '; other notable monuments are the *Hauz-i-Alāi* and the *Hauz-i-Khās* which are so famous in history.

The fourteenth century was a period of great stress and storm in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. The Mongols constantly hammered at the gates of Delhi, and the Hindu Rajas defied the authority of the central power. The result of this was that the architecture of the Tughluq period became massive and simple. The most typical building of this style is the tomb of Tughluq Shah which still exists near the old fort of Tughluqabad. Firuz was a magnificent builder who spent vast sums of money on towns, palaces, mosques, tanks, reservoirs and gardens. Many new buildings were constructed, and old ones were repaired. He founded the city of Firuzabad, the ruins of which still exist near the modern Shahjahanbad, and supplied it with abundant water by means of a well-managed canal system. He built two other cities Fatahabad and Hisār Firozā, and laid the foundations of a third called Jaunpur on the bank of the Gomti to commemorate the name of his illustrious cousin Muhammad Tughluq. He caused two Asokan pillars to be removed to Delhi, one from Topra in the Ambala district and the other from a village in the Meerut district. The contemporary chronicler 'Afif has given a highly interesting account of the transfer of these monoliths. The Sultan's interest in buildings was so keen that he never permitted the construction of any building unless its plan was carefully scrutinised by the *Diwān-i-wizārat* and finally approved by him. As Firuz was an orthodox Muslim, the austerity of the new style remained undisturbed, and it was left for the provincial dynasties which came into existence after his death to give an impetus to the development of art.

The kings of Jaunpur were great patrons of art and literature. Their buildings exist to this day, and are fine specimens of the Indo-Muhammadan art. The Atālā masjid which was completed in the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, the Jām-i-masjid, built under the patronage of Husain Shah, the Lal Darwaza mosque, and the broken façade of the Jahangiri and the

Khalis Mukhlis are some of the most remarkable specimens of Indian architecture. Similar interest in art was shown by the Sunni rulers of Gaur who developed a style different from that of Delhi and Jaunpur. The buildings of Gaur are made entirely of brick. and seem to bear traces of the imitation of Hindu temple architecture. The most remarkable buildings are the tomb of Husain Shah, the greater and lessor Golden Mosques, and Qadam Rasūl built by Sultan Nusrat Shah. The small Golden or Eunuch's Mosque is a solidly constructed building which 'is carved inside and out with beautifully chiselled designs, including the Indian lotus.' But the most striking of all is the Adīnā Mosque at Pandua, twenty miles from Gaur, which was built by Sikandar Shah in 1368 A.D.

The most beautiful of all provincial styles of architecture was that of Gujarat. Before the Muslim conquest, Gujarat was under the influence of Jainism, and naturally when the country passed into the hands of the Muslims, the master-builders whom the Muslims employed to construct their buildings adopted Hindu and Jaina designs with necessary modifications to suit the puritanical tastes of Islam. Ahmad Shah was a great builder. He founded the city of Ahmadabad in the first half of the 15th century and built mosques and palaces. Numerous buildings were erected during the 15th century at Ahmadabad, Cambay, Champanir and other important places. One of the most beautiful buildings is the mosque of Muhafiz Khan which was built towards the close of the century. Besides mosques and tombs Gujarat is famous for its step-wells, irrigation works, and public orchards.

Mandu was equally famous for its buildings in the 15th century. The massive buildings that exist to this day bear testimony to the power and magnificence of the Sultans of Mandu. Some of the most remarkable buildings are the Jami-i-

masjid, the Hindola mahal, the Jahaz mahal, the tomb of Hushang Shah, and the palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rupmati.

It was not only in North India that art made progress, but in the Deccan also it received encouragement from the Bahmani and Vijayanagar kings. The Bahmani kings founded cities and built mosques and fortresses. The mosques at Gulburga and Bidar are noble specimens of Deccan art. Some of the important buildings constructed by them are the Jam-i-masjid at Gulbarga, built by Persian architects, the Chand-Minar at Daulatabad, and the college of Mahmud Gāwān, also built in the Persian style. But the Bahmanids are famous in history for their fortresses, the chief of which are those of Gwaligarh, Narnala and Māhūr in the Adilabad district. The last of these was built as an outpost against the Hindu chiefs of the Satpura ranges. The fortresses of Parenda, Naldurg, and Panhāla were built by them to consolidate their power. At Gulburga there are two groups of important buildings. One group contains the tombs of Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, Muhammad Shah, Muhammad Shah II, and two others of a later date. The other group known collectively as the Haft Gumbad or seven domes contains the tombs of Mujahid Shah Daud Shah, Ghiyasuddin and his family, and Firuz Shah and his family. All these bear a great resemblance to one another The city of Bidar was laid out by Ahmad Shah. It has a fort and contains two other buildings of note, the tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali and the Sola mosque which was built in the reign of Muhammad Shah III. The most remarkable architecture is that of Bijapur among the Deccan kingdoms. The tomb of Muhammad ʿĀdil Shah, known as the Gol Gumbaj, is a stately edifice, scarcely inferior to any other building of the same kind.

The kings of Vijayanagar were in no way behind the Bahmanids in this respect. They had a great enthusiasm for building council chambers, public offices, irrigation works,

aqueducts, temples and palaces which were richly decorated. There is evidence to prove that an excellent system of irrigation prevailed throughout the city, and large tanks were built for the storage of water. Numerous temples were built, the most famous of which was the Vithala temple described by Fergusson as a most characteristic specimen of the Dravidian style. Sculpture and painting were not unknown, and it appears that artists acquired considerable proficiency in these branches as is shown by the accounts of the Portuguese chroniclers and the Persian envoy Abdur Razzāq.

Literature.

It is impossible to give here an exhaustive account of the various branches of mediæval literature, and all that can be done here is to give a succinct summary of the work done by famous writers and scholars. Persian literature flourished remarkably under court patronage. Amir Khusrau, the poet laureate of the empire under the Khiljis and Tughluqs, was the greatest poet of the time. He wrote copiously and his numerous works are still read with interest. His contemporary, Mir Hasan Dehlvi, was also a poet of no mean order. He enjoyed the patronage of Muhammad, the martyr prince, and Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. He composed a Diwan and wrote the memoirs of his patron saint Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia. The works of the court historians are too many to mention. The most famous of them are the *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* of Zia-ud-din Barani, the *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* of *Shams-i-Siraj* Afif and the *Tarikh-i-Mubarakshahi* of Yahya bin Abdullah and the works of Afghan historians. Jaunpur was a famous seat of learning in the middle ages, and Ibrahim Shah Sharqi was a generous patron of letters. Several literary, philosophical and theological works were written during his reign.

The Muslim scholars were not wholly unacquainted with Sanskirt. Al Biruni who came to India in the tenth century was a profound Sanskrit scholar who translated several works on philosophy and astronomy from Sanskrit into Arabic. His

Tarikh-i-Hind is still a mine of information about Hindu civilisation. In the 14th century when Firuz Tughluq captured the fort of Nagarkot, he ordered a work on philosophy, divination and omens to be translated into Persian and named it *Dalāyal-i-Firuzshahi*. Literary activity did not altogether cease under the Lodis. During Sikandar's reign a medical treatise was translated from Sanskrit into Persian.

The Hindus were not behind the Muslims in literary advancement. Though court patronage was denied to them, they continued to produce high class literature both in Sanskrit and Hindi in centres away from Muslim influence. Ramanuja wrote his commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras* in which he expounded the doctrine of Bhakti. In the twelfth century Jayadeva wrote his *Gīta Govinda,* a noble specimen of lyrical poetry which describes the love of Kṛiṣṇa and Rādhā, their estrangement and final union, and the sports of Kṛiṣṇa with the milkmaids of Vraja. The Drama flourished in those parts of India where the Muslim power was slow to reach. Some of the Dramas worthy of mention are the *Lalitā Vigraharāja Nāṭaka, Harikeli Nāṭaka, Pārvatīpariṇaya, Vidagdha Mādhava* and *Lalitā Mādhava*. Regarding legal literature it may be said that some of the best commentaries were written during this period. Works on astronomy were also written, but Hindu scholars paid little attention to history. The only work which has any claim to be called a historical treatise is Kalhaṇa's *Rājataranginī* or 'River of Kings' which was composed towards the middle of the twelfth century.

A word may be said about the development of vernacular literature during this period. The earliest writers of Hindi are Chandbardai, Jagnayak, the author of *Alhakhand*, Amir Khusrau, the parrot of Hindi, and Baba Gorakhnath who flourished in the fourteenth century. Later the Bhakti cult gave a great impetus to the Hindi literature. Kabir, Nānak, and Mīrābāi composed their hymns and devotional songs in

Hindi, and their contributions greatly enriched the literature of the language. The preachers of the Rādhā-Kṛiṣṇa cult wrote and sang in *Vrajbhāṣā* and considerably helped the growth of Hindi literature. In Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and even in the distant south the vernaculars made much progress. In Bengal, a vernacular translation of the Sanskrit Rāmāyaṇa was prepared by Kṛittivāsā whose work is 'in fact the Bible of the people of the Gangetic valley.' The *Bhāgavata* and the *Mahābhārata* were also translated under the patronage of the state. Nāmadeva, the Maratha saint, largely wrote in Marathi, and some of his hymns are still preserved in the Granth Sahib, the Bible of the Sikhs. In the South, the earliest works in Tamil and Kanarese were produced by the Jains, but in the 13th and 14th centuries a great impetus was given to literary effort by the Śaiva movement. It was during this period that Sāyaṇa and Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, two brothers, wrote their works which have placed them among the leaders of Sanskrit scholarship. The former wrote his famous commentary on the Vedas, and the latter followed his brother's example by writing several philosophical works. The Telugu literature received much encouragement from the kings of Vijayanagar. Kṛiṣṇa Deva Rāya took a keen interest in letters, and was himself the author of several works of merit.

Religious reform.

The advent of Islam wrought great changes in the religious and social outlook of the people of India. Hinduism failed to absorb the Muslims as it had absorbed the Greeks, Huns, Scythians and Sakas who became completely merged in the native population. It was because the Muslim had a clear, definite faith of his own to which he adhered with a tenacity and enthusiasm unknown to the Hindus. He considered his religion to be in no way inferior to that hydra-headed Hinduism which he found prevalent among the vanquished races in India, and this

conviction of superiority further strengthened his belief in the Quran and the Prophet. The idolatry and elaborate ritual of the Hindus suggested to him by contrast the value of his own religion, which mainly consisted in its simplicity and emphasis on the unity of the God-head. But in spite of these differences it was inevitable that the Hindus and Muslims should come in contact with each other. Time applied its healing balm to old bitternesses, and cultivated minds on both sides began to desire some sort of *rapprochement* between the two peoples. The early Turks who invaded Hindustan did not bring their wives with them. They married in the country, and their offspring naturally became less Turkish and more Indian in their habits and sentiments. The Indian women who dominated the Turkish household exerted a potent influence in moulding the character of the future generation of Musalmans, and as Havell puts it: 'the traditional devotion and tenderness of Indian motherhood helped greatly to soften the ferocity of the Turki and Mongol nomad.' There were other factors which helped the process of reconciliation. Royal patronage and sympathy won the goodwill of the Hindus in certain cases, and improved the social relations between the two traces. The Musalman realised the impossibility of completely crushing out the Hindus, while the Hindu learnt by slow and painful experience that it was useless to wage perpetual war against foes who had come to stay in the land. The Hindu converts who were obliged to renounce their faith from political pressure or economic necessity did not wholly give up their habits and usages. Their contact with Muslims naturally produced an intermingling of the two faiths and removed many angularities on both sides. It created a sympathetic frame of mind which greatly assisted the forces that were steadily working to bring about a better understanding between the two peoples. Islam held out a new hope of progress and social justice to the low caste Hindus, who were

inclined to regard it without feelings of aversion or contempt. Then, there was the influence of Muslim saints like Farīd Shakarganj of Pākpatan and Nizāmuddin Aulia of Delhi in Northern India and of Ghisūdarāz in the south. They counted their disciples among the members of both communities, and their teachings appealed to all men without distinction of caste or creed. All differences were overlooked in their presence, and a new bond of sympathy was created which united those who offered homage to them.

The Muslims introduced a new spirit into Hindu society by laying stress on the Unity of God. The doctrine of the Unity of God was not unknown to the Hindus, but its emphatic assertion in Islam had a great effect on teachers like Nāmadeva, Rāmānand, Kabir and Nānak in whom we see a happy blending of Hindu and Muslim influences. Impressed by the simplicity of the Muslim creed and its insistence on the oneness of God, they denounced idolatry and caste and preached that true religion did not consist in meaningless ritual and empty forms but in *Bhakti* or true devotion to God. The *Bhakti* cult made great progress under the influence of the great masters who followed Rāmānuja, and who dominated the religious mind of India during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The first great exponent of *Bhakti* was Rāmānuja who lived in the twelfth century and preached the worship of Viṣṇu in Southern India. His work marks a reaction against Śankara's *advaita* doctrine. He maintained that individual souls are not essentially one with the Supreme, though they all emanate from him as sparks from fire, and that the Supreme is not purely abstract Being, but possesses real qualities of goodness and beauty in an infinite degree. Thus he inculcated devotion to a *Saguṇa Īśvara*, endowed with a number of beautiful qualities and his teachings appealed to large numbers of men in South India.

Another teacher who laid stress on *Bhakti* was Rāmānand—fifth in apostolic succession from Rāmānuja—who flourished in the fourteenth century in Northern India. The special feature of Rāmānand's teachings is that he entirely discarded caste rules, enjoined in the Brahmanical system. He wandered about the country, visiting holy places and establishing the worship of Rāmā and Sītā. He admitted to his discipleship men of all castes, and is said to have twelve chief disciples (*chelas*) among whom were included a barber, a chamar and a weaver. Rāmānand was the first reformer who employed Hindi, the chief vernacular of Northern India, to interpret his doctrines, and therefore acquired much popularity with the submerged classes among the Hindus. His followers worship Viṣṇu under the form of Rāmachandra with his consort Sītā, and their chief centre is Ajodhia, the ancient capital of Kosala in the United Provinces. Of all the disciples of Rāmānand Kabir was the most famous.

Another offshoot of Vaiṣṇavism was the Kṛiṣṇa cult of which Vallabhāchārya was the most distinguished preacher. He was a Tailing Brahman and was born in 1479 in the Telugu country in the south. From his early boyhood he showed signs of genius, and in a short time acquired an immense amount of learning. He visited Mathura, Brindaban, and many other sacred places, and finally settled in Benares where he wrote his philosophical works. Vallabha Swami taught that there was no distinction between the Brahma and the individual soul, and that the latter could get rid of its bondage by means of *Bhakti*. In one of his works he says that the home, the centre of all worldly desires, should be renounced in every way, but if it be impracticable, one should dedicate it to the service of God, for it is He alone who can free man from evil. The worship of Kṛiṣṇa was inculcated, and the disciples were required to offer everything in his service. The formula of dedication had no other meaning except that the

disciple should consecrate everything to his God. But those who came after Vallabhāchārya departed from the true spirit of his teachings. They interpreted them in a material sense. And hence the system lent itself to great abuse. They taught by precept and example that God should be pleased not by self-denial and austerities, but by sanctifying all human pleasures in his service. This interpretation appealed to their rich followers mostly of the commercial classes who lacked the necessary intellectual equipment to ascertain the true doctrines of the founder of the sect. A movement has recently been set on foot to reform the evil practices which have crept into the system, and a number of devoted workers have made efforts to restore it to its original purity and vigour.

The great Vaiṣṇavite teacher Lord Chaitanya of Navadvīpa was a contemporary of Vallabha Swami. Born in 1485, he renounced the world at the early age of 25, and became a Sanyasi. He wandered about the country, preaching the doctrine of love and the worship of Kṛiṣṇa. The mesmeric influence of his presence was felt wherever he went, and thousands of men fell at his feet in reverential devotion as they heard from his lips the thrilling message of love and peace. Love was so great a passion with him that the thought of Kṛiṣṇa playing upon his flute in the wild woods of Brindaban threw him into an ecstasy. He laid stress on humility and said that a Vaiṣṇava should be absolutely without pride. 'Kriṣṇa dwells in every soul and therefore gives respect to others, without seeking any for himself.' As he uttered these words a feeling of humility overpowered his soul, and he broke forth :

> 'Neither do I want followers, nor wealth, nor learning, nor poetical powers, give unto my soul a bit of devotion for thee. Great pride never produces any good. How will He who is called the vanquisher of the proud bear with your pride?'

His heart, full of compassion for the poor and the weak melted with pity as he saw the sorrows of mankind. He denounced caste and proclaimed the universal brotherhood of man and the worship of Hari as the only means of attaining the highest bliss. Kṛiṣṇa's name knew not the barriers of caste and race. He asked his disciples to teach unto all men down to the lowest Chandala the lesson of devotion and love. He freely touched Haridas, one of his disciples, who was outcasted by his fellows. He begged the master not to touch him for he was unclean and outcasted. There was fire in the master's eye ; his heart welled up with emotion ; and he rushed forward in wild joy to embrace the outcaste and said : 'you have dedicated yourself to me ; that body of yours is mine in every respect ; an all-sacrificing and all-loving spirit dwells in it ; it is holy as a temple. Why should you consider yourself unclean ?' That is why the high and the low, the Brahman and the Sudra listened to his message and followed him. He was the very image of love and often exhorted his followers to sacrifice everything on the altar of love. A true devotee must show his love for Kṛiṣṇa by offering his services day and night to him as well as to the world. Vaiṣṇavism was to be a living force, a rule of life and not merely a religion to be practised by ascetics and recluses.

To religious teachers his advice was :—

> "Do not take too many disciples, do not abuse gods worshipped by other peoples and their scriptures, do not read too many books and do not pose as a teacher continually criticising and elucidating religious views. Take profit and loss in the same light. Do not stay there where a Vaiṣṇava is abused. Do not listen to village tales. Do not by your speech or thought cause pain to a living thing. Listen to the recitation of God's name. Recollect

> his kindness, bow to him and worship him. Do what He wills as a servant, believe Him to be a friend and then dedicate yourself to Him."

Chaitanya's name is a household word in Bengal, and there are millions of men who still worship him as an incarnation of Śrī Kṛiṣṇa and utter his name with a feeling of devotion and love.

The influence of Islam is clearly manifest in the teachings of Nāmadeva, Kabir and Nānak, who all condemned caste, polytheism and idolatry and pleaded for true faith, sincerity and purity of life. The cardinal doctrine on which they laid stress was that God is the God of Hindus as well as Muslims, of Brahmans as well as of Chandalas and that before Him all are equal. The trammels of caste and superstition must be discarded if the worshipper wants to know the true path. The first in point of time was Nāmadeva, the Maratha saint, a man of low origin, who preached the unity of God, and deprecated idol-worship and all outward observances. He feels his dependence on God and thus gives expression to it:

> "Of me who am blind, thy name, O King, is the prop,
> I am poor, I am miserable, thy name is my support.
> Bountiful and merciful Allah, thou art onerous;
> Thou art a river of *bounty*, thou art the Giver, thou art exceeding wealthy;
> Thou alone givest and takest, there is none other;
> Thou art wise, Thou art far-sighted, what conception can I form of thee.
> O Nāma's lord, Thou art the Pardoner, O God."

Kabir was the greatest disciple of Rāmānand. His origin is shrouded in mystery. Tradition says, he was born of a Brahman widow who cast him off near a tank in order to escape social odium. The child was picked up by a weaver,

Nirū, and was brought up by his wife with great affection and care. When he grew up, he took up his father's trade but found time to moralise and philosophise.

The whole back-ground of Kabir's thought is Hindu. He speaks of Rāma. He seeks freedom from transmigration, and hopes to attain the true path by means of *Bhakti*. He has an aversion for theological controversy and condemns all insincerity and hypocrisy which are mistaken for true piety. He makes no distinction between the Hindu and the Turk, who, he says, are pots of the same clay, and who are striving by different routes to reach the same goal. He pointed out the futility of mere lip-homage to the great ideals of truth and religion. Of what avail is the worship of stone and bathing in the Ganges, if the heart is not pure? Of what avail is a pilgrimage to Mecca, if the pilgrim marches towards the Kaaba with a deceitful and impure heart? Men are saved by faith and not by works. None can understand the mind of God; put your trust in Him and let Him do what seemeth Him good. He condemns idolatry and says: 'If by worshipping stones one can find God, I shall worship a mountain; better than these stones (idols) are the stones of the flour mill with which men grind their corn.' He reproached Brahmans and Maulvis alike for their theological controversies and asked them to give up their petty pride. He denounced caste and emphatically declared:

> "Vain too are the distinctions of caste. All shades of colour are but broken arcs of light; all varieties in human nature are but fragments of humanity. The right to approach God is not the monopoly of Brahmans but is freely granted to all who are characterised by sincerity of heart."

No modern crusader against caste can equal the fervour of these inspiring utterances which came from the deepest depths

of the master's soul. Caste could be no obstacle in the way of God. Forms of worship were immaterial to him for he says :

> "Suffer all men to worship God according to their convictions. Be not the slaves of tradition and love not controversy for its own sake. Fear not to walk upon unbeaten tracks, if such tracks bring you near to Him who is the truth."

Another great reformer was Nānak, the founder of the Sikh religion, who was born in 1469 A.D. at Tālwandī, a village in the Lahore district. From his boyhood Nānak showed a religious bent of mind and paid no attention to his studies. Like Kabir, he also preached the unity of God, condemned idolatry, and urged that the barriers of caste and race must give way before the name of God who transcends them all. He exhorted men to give up hypocrisy, selfishness, worldliness and falsehood for "all men's accounts shall be taken in God's court and no one shall be saved without good works." He laid stress on love and purity of life and preached that good deeds were more efficacious in securing salvation than metaphysical discussions. His creed is summed up in these words :

> "Religion consisteth not in mere words ;
> He who looketh on all men as equal is religious.
> Religion consisteth not in wandering to tombs or places of cremation, or sitting in attitudes of contemplation.
> Religion consisteth not in wandering in foreign countries, or in bathing at places of pilgrimage.
> Abide pure amidst the impurities of the world ;
> Thus shalt thou find the way to religion."

The movement of reform did not end with Nānak. The stream of thought continued to flow on ; a number of saints

and reformers arose whose achievements will be discussed later. We may again emphasise the harmonising tendency of the social and religious movements in mediæval India. Attempts were made to bridge the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims, and although the Sultans of Delhi were mostly narrow-minded bigots, there were a few who listened to the voice of reason and tried to promote concord and co-operation between the two races. Religious teachers rendered a great service to the cause of unity. The Hindus began to worship Muslim saints, and the Muslims began to show respect for Hindu gods. And this mutual goodwill is typified in the cult of Satyapir, founded by Husain Shah of Jaunpur, which represents a synthesis of the two religions. But the age was not yet ripe for introducing political reforms along these lines. For this a mighty man of genius was needed, and India had to wait till the advent of Akbar for the realisation of the dreams of her great teachers. It was only then that the Hindus and Muslims stood shoulder to shoulder in the service of a common empire, and shed their religious prejudices to an extent never reached before since the Islamic conquest of our country. It was the voice of Kabir and Nānak which spoke through the imperial lips and created a storm in orthodox circles.

CHAPTER XI

INDIA AT THE OPENING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

At the opening of the sixteenth century the kingdom of Delhi was considerably reduced in extent. Ibrahim's sway did not extend beyond Delhi, Agra, the Doab, Biyana and Chanderi. The Punjab was held by Daulat Khan and his son Ghazi Khan and Dilawar Khan who were alarmed at the unbridled tyranny of Ibrahim, and who eagerly waited for an opportunity to deliver themselves from his yoke. Like other Afghan nobles they thought rebellion safer than subordination to a prince, whose capricious temper put their lives and property in peril. Sindh and Multan towards the west and Jaunpur, Bengal and Orissa towards the east had formed themselves into independent principalities. In the central region lay the kingdoms of Malwa and Khandesh, which were ruled by Muhammadan princes. Between the kingdoms of the north and the central region lay the Rajput states, whose strength had silently increased owing to the decline of the power at Delhi and the unending quarrels of the Muslim states of the north.

Northern India.

To the south-east lay the kingdom of Jaunpur, which corresponded roughly to the districts now included in the eastern portions of the province of Agra and Oudh. The resources of its kings were by no means inconsiderable. They possessed large armies and fought against the Afghan power at Delhi with great tenacity and vigour. In 1491 Sikandar Lodi extended his conquests over the whole of Bihar and drove away Husain Shah, the last ruler of Jaunpur, to seek refuge with the ruler of Bengal. Ibrahim Lodi bungled as was his wont in the affairs of Jaunpur, where the Afghan vassals

had always been very powerful. At the earliest exhibition of Ibrahim's haughty meddlesomeness in their affairs, the Afghan barons rebelled under the leadership of Nāsir Khan Lohani of Ghazipur, Mār'uf Farmuli, and others.

Darya Khan Lohani of Bihar became the leader of the confederacy of rebels, and inflicted several defeats upon the forces sent by Ibrahim to quell the rebellion. After his death his son was acclaimed as their leader by the rebels, who continued to fight as before against the ruler of Delhi. Bengal had separated from the empire of Delhi during the reign of Firuz Tughluq who had recognised its independence. Sikandar, son of Ilyas Shah, had brought nearly the whole of Bengal under his sway as is testified by his coins. At the opening of the sixteenth century the Husaini dynasty had well established its power, and its first ruler Alauddin Husain Shah (1493—1519 A.D.) was a remarkable man who greatly enlarged his kingdom by conquest. His son Nusrat Shah maintained a splendid court and commemorated his régime by raising noble works of art. He is mentioned by Babar in his *Memoirs* as a prince of considerable substance in Hindustan. In the central region there were three important Muslim states which will be described below.

Kingdoms of the Central Region—Gujarat, Malwa and Khandesh.

The dynasty of the independent kings of Gujarat was founded by Zafar Khan who was appointed to the charge in 1391 A.D. The dynasty produced a number of able and ambitious rulers like Mahmud. Ahmad Shah and Mahmud Bīgaḍa, who greatly increased its power and influence. After the death of Sultan Mahmud Bīgaḍa, Muzaffar Shah II succeeded to the throne in 1511 A.D. He had to contend against formidable rivals, the prince of Malwa, Sultan Mahmud Khilji II (1510—31 A.D.), the last ruler of the independent Malwa dynasty and the Rajput ruler of Mewar. In 1518 the ruler of Gujarat in response to the request of

Mahmud, the legitimate ruler, who was thrown into the shade by his powerful minister Medini Rao (a Rajput chief who had usurped all authority in the state) marched into Malwa at the head of a large army and captured the fort of Mandu. The Rajputs offered a gallant resistance, and it is said that nearly 19 thousand perished in the final encounter with the Gujarat forces, and Medini Rao's son was among the slain. Medini Rao lost his hard-won influence, but he was reinstated in Chanderi by Rana Sanga, the redoubtable chief of Mewar. His gratitude found expression in his adhesion to the Rana's cause, when the latter marched against Babar to fight the historic battle at Khanwah[1] in 1527. Feelings of jealousy had existed between Gujarat and Mewar for a long time, and Rana Sanga got his long-desired opportunity through the indiscretion of the Muslim governor of Īdar. The latter used abusive language towards the Rana which was communicated to him. The Rana marched against Īdar at the head of 40,000 brave Rajputs, and obtained a victory over the Gujarat forces. Sanga's generals urged him to advance upon Ahmadabad, the capital of the Gujarat kings, but he felt reluctant to do so and returned. We do not know what relations existed at this time between the kingdoms of Delhi and Gujarat. The author of the *Mirat-i-Sikandari* writes (Bayley, pp. 276-77) in recording the events of the year 1525 that Alam Khan, uncle of Sultan Ibrahim of Delhi, paid a visit to Muzaffar and sought his help against his overweening nephew. Apparently no help seems to have been given, and Alam Khan was dismissed with an escort courteously provided by his host. About the same time Prince Bahadur, the second son of Muzaffar, reached Delhi to seek protection against the hostile designs of his elder brother Sikandar. He was well received at court, but when Ibrahim suspected him of siding with disaffected persons he

1 It is now called Khānuā.

left for Jaunpur. Soon after came the news of his father's death, and the ambitious Bahadur hastened back to Gujarat.

To the north of Khandesh lay the important kingdom of Malwa. The origin of the kingdom has been described before. The founder of the independent line of kings was Dilawar Khan Ghori who was a feoffee of Sultan Firuz Tughluq of Delhi. Dilawar Khan threw off the imperial yoke in 1398 during the anarchy which followed the invasoin of Timur. The Ghori dynasty ended in 1435 A.D. when power was usurped by Mahmud Khan, the minister of the Ghori chieftain, who ascended the throne under the title of Mahmud Khilji. Mahmud was a remarkable ruler who ceaselessly fought against Gujarat and Mewar, and passed during his life through vicissitudes of no mean order. Firishta rightly says that his tent was his home and the field of battle his resting place. During the reign of Mahmud II (1512—30), the fourth ruler of the Khilji dynasty, the Rajputs dominated the affairs of Malwa, and the gallant chief Medini Rao, who had helped him in securing the throne had fully established his ascendancy. But the Rajput influence was an eyesore to the Muslims, and they conspired to drive Medini Rao from the position he occupied in the state. The Sultan secretly escaped to Gujarat to seek help from the ruler of that country. Muzaffar received him well and promised assistance against the 'infidels.' He marched upon Gujarat at the head of a large army and reinstated Mahmud at Mandu. Soon afterwards Mahmud marched against Medini Rao who received assistance from Rana Sanga of Chittor. A fierce battle raged between the Rajputs and the Malwa forces which suffered a total defeat, and the Sultan was himself wounded. The magnanimous Rana treated him with great kindness, took him to his tent where he ordered his wounds to be dressed, and released him from captivity when he became convalescent. Such was the state of Malwa in the year 1525. Mahmud was distracted by internal dissensions,

and the country was torn by civil war. Meanwhile a fresh calamity came from another quarter. In 1526 Mahmud offered shelter to Bahadur's brother, Chand Khan, who had succeeded Muzaffar in the *gaddi* of Gujarat. He had listened also to the overtures of one Razi-ul-Mulk, a nobleman from Gujarat, who had espoused the cause of Chand Khan and had applied to Babar for aid. Bahadur advanced upon Mandu and inflicted a sharp defeat upon Mahmud and his forces. Mahmud was put in chains, and sent as a prisoner along with his sons to Champanir in the custody of Asaf Khan. Five days later the escort led by Asaf Khan was attacked by 2,000 Bhils and Kols in camp at Dohud. Asaf considered it an attempt to deliver the royal family from his custody, and ordered the king and his sons to be put to death. Thus ended the Khilji dynasty of Malwa, and the territories over which it held sway became subject to the ruler of Gujarat.

The other state lying in the central region was Khandesh. Khandesh was formerly a province of the Delhi empire, but it became an independent principality under Malik Raja Farūqī who was appointed governor of the place by Firuz Tughluq in 1370. After Malik Raja's death in 1399 his more able and ambitious son Malik Nāsir Khan succeeded to the throne. The treacherous manner in which he overpowered Āsā Ahīr and his men has been described in a previous chapter. Asirgarh fell into the hands of Nāsir, but he shrank from using the treasures found in the fortress. The last notable ruler of Khandesh was Ādil Khan Farūqī (1457—1503 A.D.) who did much to increase the material prosperity of his kingdom. Under ' Ādil Burhanpur grew to be one of the most beautiful cities in India. It was he who completed the fortifications of Asirgarh. The manufactures of gold and silver thread and brocaded silks and muslins reached a high degree of development under the Farūqī kings, and are still in a flourishing condition. The annals of the dynasty have no special

importance. The Farūqī Kings allied themselves with the rulers of Gujarat by means of matrimonial connections and often received support from them in their wars against the Muslim states of the south. At the time of Babar's invasion of Hindustan Khandesh was ruled by Miran Muhammad who had succeeded to the throne in 1520 A.D. The commonplace character of the history of this dynasty obtrudes itself upon our notice as we read through the pages of Firishta, and we feel relieved to see, in the words of a modern writer, Khandesh affording a good example of the manner in which the amenities of life may flourish under conditions which prohibit the exercise of the arts of politics.

Rajputana.

Ever since the death of Alauddin Khilji the states of Rajputana had played no part in the affairs of the Delhi Empire. Alauddin had entrusted the fort of Chittor to the Sonigra chieftain Maldeva of Jalor, but the latter seems to have lost all influence after the death of the war-lord of Delhi. The Sisodia Prince Hamir who had remained in a state of sullen hostility all this time increased his resources and began to seize portions of the Mewar territory during the lifetime of Maldeva. Gradually after the death of the latter Hamir defeated Maldeva's son, Jaisa, and acquired possession of the entire principality of Mewar. Hamir was a powerful prince, who, according to the Rajput chronicles, seems to have encountered with success the forces of the Delhi Sultan. That may or may not be correct, but in an inscription of Maharana Kumbha's time dated 1438 A.D., Hamir is described as the achiever of renown by slaying countless Muslims in the field of battle.[2] There is evidence to prove that Hamir conquered Jilwara from the mountaineers (Bhils) on whom he inflicted a crushing defeat, and similar success attended his arms when he marched against Jitakarṇa, the prince of Īdar. Tod's

[2] Bombay Branch A. S. J. XXXIII, p. 50.

statement that the ancestors of the present princes of Marwar and Jaipur brought their livies, paid homage, and obeyed the summons of the prince of Chittor as did the chiefs of Bundi, Gwalior, Chanderi, Raisin, Sikri, Kalpi, Abu, etc., is doubtless an exaggeration. Hamir died about the year 1364 A.D. leaving Mewar a fairly large and prosperous kingdom. His son Khṣetra Singh worthily upheld the traditions of his father and made his power felt by the neighbouring chieftains. His son Lākhā who ascended the *gaddi* in 1382 A.D. distinguished himself by winning victories over his foes and by raising works of public utility. But when Lākhā's grandson, Rana Kumbha, who is so famous in the annals of Mewar, succeeded to the throne in 1433 A. D. the position of Mewar was seriously affected by the rise of the Muslim states of Malwa and Gujarat. The Muslim rulers were eager to extinguish the independence of Mewar and left no stone unturned to reduce her power. It is needless to enter into a detailed account of the struggle between these rival powers in which victory rested sometimes with the Muslims and sometimes with the Rajput chieftain. The Rana was assassinated in 1468 A.D. by his son Ūdā who was probably impatient to obtain possession of the *gaddi* of Mewar. The people of Mewar rightly refused to see the face of the parricide and denounced his unfilial and inhuman conduct. Want of confidence made his task difficult, and the throne was seized by his brother Raimal after a period of five years in 1473. After his death in May 1509, Sangram Singh, his youngest son, succeeded to the *gaddi* of Mewar. His accession marked the dawn of a new era in the history of that country.

The empire of Delhi had lost much of its former greatness, and Sangram Singh had little to fear from Sikandar Lodi who had his own difficulties to overcome, but Malwa and Gujarat were ruled at this time by Nāsir Shah and Muhammad Bīgaḍa who were bound to come in conflict with him. During the

early years of his reign Sangram Singh established his prestige by defeating the forces of Gujarat, and by effective interference in the affairs of Īdar. The Rana had been grabbing for several years small portions of the Delhi territory, but when Ibrahim Lodi came to the throne, he led an attack against Mewar at the head of a considerable force. Victory rested with the Rajputs, and the Rana ended the conflict with the seizure of certain districts of Malwa, which had been annexed to Delhi by Sikandar Lodi.

Next came the turn of Malwa. The Sultan of Malwa Mahmud II had admitted the Rajput chief Medini Rao of Chanderi to his councils to act as a counterpoise to the influence of his turbulent amirs. The amirs appealed to the rulers of Delhi and Gujarat for help against the 'infidels.' But Medini Rao proved equal to the occasion. He defeated the allied forces of Delhi and Gujarat and re-established the authority of Mahmud. Thus foiled in their designs, the hostile amirs intrigued with success to poison the ears of Sultan Mahmud against Medini Rao. The Sultan appealed to Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat for aid, and the latter escorted him back in triumph to Mandu and reinstated him in his throne. Medini Rao sought the help of Sanga who marched against Mahmud at the head of 50,000 men, and in the encounter that followed the Sultan of Mandu was badly wounded. The Rana conveyed the royal captive to his camp, and finally took him to Chittor where he was kept as a prisoner for three months. He was afterwards liberated on the payment of an indemnity (the expenses of war) and the surrender of a prince as a guarantee for his good behaviour in the future. This misplaced generosity aggravated the Rana's difficulties and afforded encouragement to his enemies.

Sultan Muzaffar of Gujarat combined with the Sultan of Malwa against the Rana to wipe out the disgrace of his former defeat. Malik Ayaz, the governor of Sorath (Surat), who had

joined with 20,000 horse and some field pieces was placed in command. The Rana was put on his mettle by the preparations of his allies, and marched against them at the head of a large army. Ayaz retreated to his charge without risking an engagement with the Rana, and the Sultan of Mandu did likewise. What the Muslim historians have described as a retreat compelled by the dissensions of the military officers was in all probability a defeat at the hands of the Mewar forces.

These campaigns spread Rana Sanga's fame far and wide. Foreign princes feared him, and Mewar became the refuge of dispossessed or disinherited heirs. By the year 1525 it had developed into a first class military state. Her resources were thoroughly organised, and it was clear that any foreigner who attempted the conquest of Hindustan would have to grapple with the warlike ruler of Mewar.

The Haras of Bundi had begun to assert themselves against the dominant influence of Mewar, but they had no connection with the Muslim government at Delhi. The Rathor monarchy at Jodhpur under Rao Ganga (1516—32) was weakened by internecine civil strife towards the beginning of the sixteenth century, but the sons of Jodha united their forces against the Mughal invader and joined the confederacy of Rana Sanga.

Sindh.

The province of Sindh was too far away from Delhi to exercise any influence on the politics of Hindustan. Early in the 14th century it formed a part of the empire of Alauddin Khilji, and Alauddin's brother Ulugh Khan held the governorship of Multan. Later it was included in Muhammad Tughluq's empire, but towards the close of his life the Sumras had given shelter to Taghi who had rebelled against the Sultan. The latter pursued the rebel and died in Thatta. The Jams got their long-desired opportunity, and it is said that after the death of Muhammad, Jam Khairuddin adopted a sulky attitude and refused to pay homage to Firuz. Firuz marched against his son Jām Bābīniyā and

conquered Sindh, though he afterwards restored him to office. The Sumras soon lost their ascendancy, and their place was taken by the Samma dynasty towards the middle of the fourteenth century. The fortunes of the Sammas were seriously affected by the turn that affairs were taking in the Afghan regions. In 1516 Babar marched against Shah Beg Arghūn, the governor of Qandhar and laid siege to the fort. Unable to withstand the rising power of Babar, Shah Beg Arghūn made a treaty with him by which he was compelled to surrender Qandhar to Babar's officers. The Shah ratified the cession by sending to the conqueror the keys of the fortress. The loss of Qandhar obliged the Shah to seek another field of activity, and he turned towards Sindh. Thatta was occupied and given up to plunder in 1520. The Jam made his submission, and with every mark of abject humility implored the forgiveness of the conqueror. The Arghūn dynasty was thus established in Sindh, and its power was considerably increased by Shah Beg's son Shah Husain, who annexed Multan and extinguished the Langah dynasty. At the time Babar was planning his invasion of Hindustan, these two dynasties were grappling with each other in order to establish their ascendancy in Sindh. There seems to have been no connection between the decrepit empire of Delhi and the desert province of Sindh.

The history of the southern plateau is interesting only in so far as it shows the growth of the imperialistic idea in the Deccan, while it was steadily declining in the north. The Afghan empire in Hindustan had dwindled into insignificance under Ibrahim, but below the Vindhyas two formidable empires had risen into prominence, the empire of the Bahmanids and the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar. Their political designs brought them inevitably into conflict, and backed by their unlimited zeal they engaged in wars which caused much suffering and loss to the combatants on either side. They fought long and hard for

The Deccan.

supremacy but exercised little or no influence on the political affairs of northern India. The kingdom of Vijayanagar was founded as has been said before by two brothers Harihar and Bukka, who were in the service of the Raja of Telingana in 1336, and since then it had developed its territory and its prestige owing to the efforts of a series of remarkable rulers. The reign of Kṛiṣṇa Deva Rāya which lasted from 1509 to 1530 A.D. is a glorious period in the annals of the empire of Vijayanagar. Kṛiṣṇa Deva Rāya organised a large army, and waged several wars against the Muslim powers of the south. His conquest of the Raichur valley greatly increased his prestige, and so weakened the power of Adil Shah that he ceased to think for the time being, at any rate, of any conquest in the south. It scared upon the minds of the Muslims the lesson that their separatist tendencies greatly injured their interests and that unity was essential for effectively curbing the "arrogance and insolence" of the Hindus. When Abdul Razzāq, the Persian ambassador, visited the Deccan in 1542—44 the Hindu empire was at the height of its power. He has given an elaborate description of the glory and grandeur of the great city, which has been reproduced in a previous chapter in this volume. The empire was destroyed by the Muslims in 1565 at the battle of Talikota, but at the opening of the 16th century it was in the plenitude of power. It is true, it had no connection with the Muslim empire of the north, but as Professor Rushbrooke-Williams suggests with great force it effectively prevented the states of the Deccan from acquiring such ascendancy as would have jeopardised the independence of the Rajput states. It checked the northward expansion of the Muslim states which in turn prevented it from seeking a field of conquest in the trans-Vindyan region like Indra and Tailapa, who had carried their arms triumphantly into the territory of Malwa and Dhar. The Bahmani kingdom which was founded in 1347 by Hasan Kāngu, an Afghan

officer in the service of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq of Delhi, broke up into five independent principalities after the execution of the famous minister Mahmud Gāwān in 1481 A.D. The resources of the Bahmanids enabled them to fight on equal terms with the empire of Vijayanagar, but notwithstanding their vast territories, riches, and power they failed to attain much political importance in the south. Surprising as it may seem, it was the result of the restraint which was inposed upon their activities by the rulers of Vijayanagar who vigilantly watched their movements and applied the brake whenever it was felt necessary. The dismemberment of the Bahmani kingdom reduced Muslim energy in the Deccan to fragments, and the small states which took its place could never acquire that eminence which concentration and consolidation alone can give to a vast dominion, acting under undivided leadership and following a common principle.

Babar's account of Hindustan.

Babar gives an account of Hindustan on the eve of his invasion. He speaks of five Muslim and two Hindu kings of substance. The greater part of Hindustan, says he, was in the possession of the empire of Delhi, but in the country there were many independent and powerful kings. The leading kingdoms noted by him are—the Afghan kingdom which extended from Behreh to Bihar; of Jaunpur and Bengal in the east; of Malwa in Central India; of Gujarat with the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan which arose out of the ruins of the Bahmani kingdom. The two pagan princes mentioned by him are the Rāya of Vijayanagar and Rana Sanga of Chittor. Of these princes Babar writes :—

"The five kings who have ben mentioned are great princes, and are all Musalmans, and possessed of formidable armies and rulers of vast territories. The most powerful of the pagan princes, in point of territory and army, is the Raja of Bijanagar. Another is the Rana Sanga, who has attained his present

high eminence, only in these later times, by his own valour and his sword. His original principality was Chitur."

India was thus a congeries of states at the opening of the sixteenth century and likely to be the easy prey of an invader who had the strength and will to attempt her conquest.

CHAPTER XII

FOUNDATION OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

Zahīruddin Muhammad Babar was born on Friday, the 24th of February, 1483 A.D. As the Mughals could not pronounce his name they called him Babar which in Turki means a tiger. He was descended from Timur, the Lame, in the fifth degree on his father's side, while through his mother he could trace descent from the great Mongol (or Mughal) conqueror Chingiz Khan.[1] His father 'Umar Shaikh Mirza held the small kingdom of Farghānā which is now a small province of Russian Turkistan about 50,000 square miles in extent. In 1494 after his father's death which was caused by an accident, Babar, though only eleven years of age, succeeded to the throne of Farghānā. The early training of the young prince must have been exceptionally well managed, for in later years he had little time to devote himself to intellectual pursuits. During these years he acquired mastery over Turki and Persian, the two languages which he wrote and spoke with great ease and facility. His maternal grandmother, a lady of much sense and sagacity, moulded and shaped his character in early boyhood and instilled in him the love of virtue, valour and devotion.

Early career of Babar.

Though master of Farghānā, Babar who was only a tender stripling was surrounded on all sides by formidable enemies.

[1] Babar was not a Mughal. He was a Turk descended from Timur on his father's side. His mother was a daughter of Yūnus Khan, a Mongol or Mughal chief of Central Asia. The so-called Mughal Emperors of India were in reality Turks and not Mughals.

In fact Babar treated the Mughals with contempt and held their ways of life in abhorrence. He always distinguishes the Turks from the Mongols and writes the latter as Mughals.

These were his own kinsmen and the Uzbeg chief Shaibani Khan with whom he had to fight for his very existence. Though young in years, Babar formed the resolve of conquering Samarqand and seating himself in the throne of the mighty Timur. He advanced upon Samarqand and was unsuccessfully opposed by Shaibani Khan, the Uzbeg chief. He entered the city in triumph and received the homage of 'nobles and braves, one after the other.' But these triumphal scenes were soon disturbed by the news that a conspiracy was formed in Farghānā to deprive him of his patrimony. Babar hurried to the scene, but as soon as he turned his back Samarqand was lost. He again attempted an invasion of Samarqand and captured the city with a small force of 240 men. Once more did he instal himself on the throne of Timur and received the homage of the nobles and grandees. But the throne of Samarqand was not a bed of roses. The Uzbeg chief collected a large army and defeated Babar in a highly contested battle at Archian (June, 1503). Babar succeeded with difficulty in saving his life and wandered as a homeless exile for about a year in great misery, but not even these reverses could destroy the serenity and cheerfulness of his temper. Farghānā was also lost.

Shaibani Khan had in the meantime acquired easy possession of the whole country of Khorasan, and there was none to check his rising power. Even Babar trembled for his safety, and anxiously watched the movements of his foes, who had ravaged Transoxiana, Khwarizm, Farghānā and Khorasan, and had driven the Timurids from their thrones. The Uzbegs advanced upon Qandhar and their approach alarmed Babar who retired towards Hindustan. But luckily for him a rebellion occurred in another part of Shaibani's dominions which obliged him to raise the siege of Qandhar. This hasty retreat enabled Babar to return to his capital soon afterwards. It was at this time that he assumed the title of Padshah—'emperor,' a title not yet adopted by any Timurid. Though his throne was far

from secure, the adoption of this new title marked an important change in his political ideas.

Having established himself firmly at Kabul, Babar once again tried to conquer Samarqand. The destruction of Shaibani Khan at the hands of Ismail, the founder of the Safvi line of the kings of Persia, encouraged him in his designs. With his help Babar marched against the Uzbegs. His name worked like magic, and the people of town and countryside extended to him a cordial welcome. Bokhara was soon reached, and Babar acquired it without encountering any resistance. From Bokhara he advanced upon Samarqand and entered it in triumph in October, 1511, after an absence of nine years.

But his position was far from secure. The fates had ruled that Babar should not sway Timur's sceptre. His outward conformity to the Shia formulæ, which was one of the conditions of his treaty with Shah Ismail, provoked the resentment of his subjects who lost confidence in him and began to look upon him as a heretic. For eight months he enjoyed himself in the capital of Timur, but he was soon alarmed by the news that the Uzbegs under Shaibani's son were about to march upon Bokhara. Forthwith he proceeded against them ; but in the battle that followed he was utterly routed in 1512. Thus defeated, he withdrew to the fortress of Hissar. The Persian force sent by Shah Ismail to aid him was defeated by the Uzbegs, and its general was slain in battle. Babar was reduced to great straits and in despair he once again turned to Kabul. He was now convinced of the impossibility of gaining success in the west, and therefore made up his mind to try his luck in the east.

Babar's final invasion of Hindustan was preceded by a number of preliminary raids in Indian territory which deserve a passing mention. The fortress of Bajour was captured after a gallant defence by the beleagured garrison and Babar rightly regard-

Early Indian Raids.

ed it as the first. He marched against Bhira (1519) on the Jhelam which he captured without encountering any resistance. The people were treated kindly and the soldiers who were guilty of excesses were put to death. At the suggestion of his advisers he sent an ambassador to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi to demand the restoration of the 'countries which from old times had belonged to the Turks,' but he was detained by Daulat Khan at Lahore so that he returned after five months without a reply. Having subdued Bhira, Khushab and the country of the Chenab, Babar returned to Kabul by the Kurram Pass. During this period he had a surfeit of pleasure and merriment. He became a hard drunkard and began to drug himself with opium. In the company of his friends and generals Babar held drinking bouts which often grew so uproarious and noisy as to become 'burdensome and unpleasant.'

Though Babar frequently gave a free rein to mirth and excess, he was not a slave to his senses. The Bachanalian revels of which the *Memoirs* speak with striking candour did not interfere with the progress of his expeditions. In 1520 Badakhshan was seized and Prince Humayun was appointed to its charge. Two years later he wrested Qandhar from the Arghūns and entrusted it to his younger son Kamran Mirza.

Freed from danger in the Afghan region, Babar again turned his attention towards Hindustan. The government of Ibrahim Lodi, the Afghan ruler at Delhi, was deservedly unpopular, and the leading Afghan barons were driven into revolt by his hauteur and policy of persecution. The discontent of the barons reached its highest pitch when Ibrahim cruelly treated Dilawar Khan, son of Daulat Khan Lodi. Annoyed at this treatment, the latter sent through his son an invitation to Babar at Kabul to invade Hindustan.

Such a proposal was welcome to Babar who had long cherished the dream of the conquest of Hindustan. He started from Kabul in 1524 and advanced upon Lahore where

he routed an Afghan army. The city fell into his hands, but Daulat Khan who had masked his allegiance under the cloak of ambition disapproved of these proceedings. Babar did not mind his murmurs and entrusted to him the fief of Jalandhar and Sultanpur, but Daulat Khan soon fell out of favour owing to his hostile intrigues. He was deprived of his jagir which was conferred upon Dilawar Khan who had revealed Daulat's hostile plans to Babar. Having made over Dipalpur to Alam Khan, Babar returned to Kabul.

Babar's departure brought Daulat Khan once more upon the scene. He wrested Sultanpur from his son and drove Alam Khan from Dipalpur. Alam Khan fled to Kabul and made a treaty with Babar by which he agreed to cede to him Lahore and the country to the west of it, if he were seated upon the throne of Delhi. Alam Khan, who was a nerveless adventurer, shortly afterwards broke this treaty at the instigation of Daulat Khan, and both together made a joint attack upon Ibrahim Lodi, but the latter drove them from the field of battle with heavy losses.

Babar was eager for the conquest of Hindustan but as Professor Rushbrook-Williams observes the intrigues of Daulat Khan and the faithlessness of Alam Khan had modified the whole situation. He could no longer act in collaboration with them, and therefore decided to strike unaided for the empire of Hindustan. When he reached the Punjab, Daulat Khan made fresh overtures and implored forgiveness. With his usual magnanimity Babar pardoned his offences and allowed him to retain possession of his tribal villages, but deprived him of the rest of his property. The Punjab easily came into his hands, but the more difficult task was to conquer Delhi. His resources were inadequate for this enterprise ; he had to fight not only against frontier tribes but against the whole might of an organised empire in a country with which he was but imperfect-

Battle of Panipat, 1526.

ly acquainted. These seeming disadvantages did not damp his enthusiasm, and he embarked on his task with his usual courage and optimism, as is shown by the following passage which we come across in his *Memoirs*:

> "Having placed my foot in the stirrup of resolution and my hand on the reins of confidence in God, I marched against Sultan Ibrahim, son of Sultan Sikandar, son of Sultan Bahlol Lodi Afghan, in whose possession the throne of Delhi and the dominions of Hindustan at that time were."[2]

Babar's approach was welcomed by the discontented elements in the country. He had received a message from Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar whom he afterwards accused of the non-fulfilment of his promise.[3] Hearing the news of Babar's approach, Ibrahim sent two advance parties to deal with him, but both of them were defeated and Babar advanced unhindered as far as Sirsawah. Here he busied himself in making preparations for a decisive contest with the Afghans. As the latter outnumbered him by thousands, he realised that he could defeat them only by an effective combination of his highly trained cavalry and his new artillery. His generals Ustad Ali and Mustafa could easily scatter an undisciplined host, if they were properly assisted by infantry and cavalry men, and on this Babar concentrated his full attention. He collected 700 gun carts which, fastened together by twisted raw

[2] King, Memoirs II, p. 174.

[3] In recording the events which occurred after the battle of Panipat Babar writes :—

"Although Rana Sanga, the Pagan, when I was in Kabul, had sent me an ambassador with professions of attachment and had arranged with me, that, if I would march from that quarter into the vicinity of Delhi, he would march from the other side upon Agra; yet when I defeated Ibrahim, and took Delhi and Agra, the Pagan, during all my operations, did not make a single movement." King, Memoirs II, p. 254.

bull hides, were to form a laager for the protection of the musketeers and matchlockmen. Between each pair of wagons were constructed small breastworks (tura) in large numbers along that portion of the front which Ustad Ali and Mustafa were to occupy.

Two marches brought Babar and his army to Panipat, a small village near Delhi, where the fate of India has been thrice decided, on April 12, 1526. He took up a position which was strategically highly advantageous. His right wing was to be sheltered by the town of Panipat ; in the centre were posted cannon and matchlockmen, and he strengthened it with the line of breastworks and wagons, which he had already prepared. The left was strengthened by digging a ditch and constructing an *abatis* of felled trees. The line which protected the centre was not continuous, and Babar took care to leave gaps, at intervals of a bowshot, large enough for a hundred or hundred and fifty men to charge abreast. Such were the preparations which Babar made for his coming encounter with the enemy.

Sultan Ibrahim had also reached Panipat at the head of a large army. Babar estimated that he had with him one hundred thousand men—a formidably large number—which must have included non-effectives also. He writes in his *Memoirs* that Ibrahim might have collected a larger force still had he not been so niggardly in spending money, for in Hindustan it is easy to obtain soldiers for hire. The Afghan side was weaker partly because Ibrahim's soldiers were mostly mercenaries and partly because the Sultan himself was an inexperienced man, 'who marched without order, retired or halted without plan and engaged in battle without foresight.'[4]

The two armies faced each other for eight days but neither side took the offensive. At last Babar's patience was tired out,

[4] King, Memoirs II, p. 183.

and he resolved on prompt action. He divided his men after the traditional manner of the East into three sections—the right, centre and left—and posted flanking parties of Mongols on the extreme right and left to effect the charge of the *tulughma*—a well-known Mongol manœuvre in order to produce a deadly effect on the enemy. The army of Delhi advanced to attack Babar's right whereupon he ordered the reserve to march to its rescue. The Afghans pressed on, but when they approached the ditches, *abatis* and hurdles, they hesitated for a moment, not knowing whether they should attack or retire. The rear ranks pushed forward, and their pressure from behind caused some disorder of which Babar took full advantage. His flanking parties on both extremes wheeled round and attacked the enemy in rear, while the right and left wings pressed forward and the centre discharged fire with deadly effect. The battle raged fiercely, and the Afghan wings were driven into hopeless confusion by Babar's flankers. They were hemmed in on all sides and attacked with arrows and artillery. 'Ustad Ali and Mustafa, Babar's captains of artillery, poured death upon the disorderly Afghan crowd which was now unable to advance or retreat. The men fought with great courage but hopeless confusion followed. The carnage lasted some hours, and the troops, pressed from all sides, sought refuge in flight. Ibrahim's army was utterly defeated, and the losses on his side were appallingly heavy. According to the calculation of Babar's officers about 15 or 16 thousand men perished on the field of battle. Ibrahim died fighting like a valiant Afghan, and his dead body was discovered amidst a heap of corpses that lay near him. Babar learnt afterwards at Agra that altogether forty or fifty thousand men had fallen in this battle.[5] The success of Babar was due

[5] Babar writes that on reaching Agra he found from the accounts of the natives of Hindustan that forty or fifty thousand men had fallen in the field. Memoirs II, p. 187.

to skilled generalship and a scientific combination of cavalry and artillery. Ibrahim's head was brought to Babar along with a large number of prisoners and spoils of all kinds. The battle lasted till midday and Babar writes that by the grace and mercy of Almighty God the mighty army of Delhi was in the space of half a day laid in the dust.

The battle of Panipat placed the empire of Delhi in Babar's hands. The power of the Lodi dynasty was shattered to pieces, and the sovereignty of Hindustan passed to the Chaghtai Turks. Babar distributed the vast booty that came into his hands among his kinsmen and officers. Offerings were sent to Mecca and Medina, and so great was the generosity shown by the conqueror that every living person in Kabul received a silver coin as a token of royal favour. Immediately after the battle he sent Prince Humayun to capture Agra and followed himself soon afterwards. Humayun accorded to him a warm welcome and presented to him the famous diamond which he had obtained from the Raja of Gwalior, but Babar with his usual generosity gave it back to his son.

Babar was not yet firmly seated upon the throne of Delhi. He had to wrest the country from the Afghan barons who held large fiefs all over Hindustan. How was this to be accomplished? His officers dreaded the hot weather and felt anxious to get back to their homes. A war council was summoned and Babar appealed to his Begs to stay and to renounce their seditious purposes. The appeal produced the desired effect, and with the exception of one man all expressed their determination to remain with him. This decision of Babar was momentous for two reasons. In the first place, it opened the eyes of the Rajputs to the great danger that loomed on the horizon, and secondly, it brought to Babar the submission of several notable chiefs in the Doab and elsewhere. His own chiefs were satisfied by the grant of jagirs and helped him in reducing a large part of the country to submission. Biyana,

Gwalior and Dholpur were all subdued. Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Kalpi were conquered by Humayun, while Babar remained at Agra thinking out ways and means of dealing with the Rajputs. It was at this time that an unsuccessful attempt was made to poison him by the mother of Ibrahim Lodi. Had her nefarious design succeeded, the history of India would have been different.

Babar and the Rajputs.

The most formidable chieftain against whom Babar had still to fight was Rana Sangram Singh, better known to fame as Rana Sanga, of Mewar. He came of the noble stock of Sisodia and was renowned all over Rajasthan as a prince of great intellect, valour and virtue, and occupied a premier position among his fellow-princes. His heroic exploits are commemorated in the Rajput Saga, and the bards of Rajasthan still relate the tale of his heroic achievements. He waged wars against his neighbours, and by his conquests greatly enlarged the small principality of Mewar. He had undertaken several successful campaigns against the ruler of Malwa. He had conquered Bhilsa, Sarangpur. Chanderi and Ranthambhor and entrusted them to vassals of his own. The princes of Marwar and Amber acknowledged his pre-eminence and the Raos of Gwalior, Ajmer, Sikri, Raiseen, Kalpi, Chanderi, Bundi, Gagrāon, Rampura, and Abu paid homage as his feudatories.[6] The weakness of the Delhi empire and the constant quarrels of the Afghan barons had indirectly strengthened Sanga by giving him an opportunity of developing his power unhindered. His military resources exceeded those of all the other princes of his time, and Tod writes that eighty thousand horse, seven Rajas of the highest rank, nine Raos and one hundred and four chieftains bearing the titles of Rawal and Rawat with five

[6] Tod: Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, edited by Crooke, I, pp. 348-49.

hundred war elephants followed him to the field of battle.[7] He made his power felt in Central India and Gujarat and greatly added to the prestige of his house, so much so indeed, that even Babar, who found in him a foe worthy of his steel, admits that the position to which he had attained was won by his valour and sword. Our admiration for him increases all the more when we learn how much his wars had cost his iron frame. He had lost one eye, one arm and one leg in battle, all of which constituted proofs of his unremitting exertions in war. No wonder, then, if the spirits of Babar's soldiers and officers sank before the men who swept like an avalanche towards the battlefield of Khanwah under the leadership of the greatest Hindu warrior of the age.

The Rana had opened negotiations with Babar when he was at Kabul, but had not kept his promise. Babar writes in his *Memoirs* that it was arranged between the parties that while the Padshah attacked Sultan Ibrahim from the Delhi side, Rana Sanga was to attack him from the side of Agra. Both accused each other of bad faith, and the Rana claimed Kalpi, Dholpur, and Biyana which had been occupied by Babar's officers. The Rana advanced towards Biyana and was joined by Hasan Khan Mewati. One of his sons had been captured by Babar in the battle of Panipat and detained as a hostage. At Hasan's persistent entreaties he was released in the belief that this act of magnanimity would be appreciated by the Mewati chieftain. But it turned out a vain hope. No sooner was the young man released than his father joined Rana Sanga and made common cause with him.

The alliance of these two formidable antagonists greatly perturbed Babar, and on the 11th of February, 1527, he marched out of Agra to take the field against Rana Sanga and encamped at Sikri, a village near Fatehpur, the deserted city of Akbar.

7 Tod, I, p. 348.

Hitherto he had fought against Muslims; he had met the Uzbeg, the Afghan and the Turk in battle, but he had never encountered such dauntless fighters as the Rajputs who were as famous for their chivalry and gallantry as for their complete disregard of life. It must be a war to the knife, for the Rajput defied death and destruction even when matched against heavy odds. The Rana was near at hand, and the Rajputs succeeded in repelling an attack by one of Babar's detachments.

Babar engaged himself in making preparations for battle, but his men were affrighted by the reports of Rajput strength and valour. Just at this time came an astrologer, whom Babar describes as a 'rascally fellow,' from Kabul who began to disconcert the army by his ominous predictions. Without heeding the forecasts of this bird of evil presage, Babar took steps to instil a fresh hope and ardour into the hearts of his soldiers. He renounced wine, poured out large quantities on the ground, broke all his costly vessels, and took a solemn vow not to indulge in liquor again. At the same time to mark his penitence he remitted the stamp duty in case of Muslims and issued a *farman* in which he made several important concessions to his co-religionists.

Babar reinforced this act of abstinence with a direct appeal. Calling together his officers and men he spoke in words which recall to our minds the melodramatic eloquence of Napoleon Bonaparte on such occasions. This is what he said:

> "Noblemen and soldiers! Every man that comes into the world is subject to dissolution. When we are passed away and gone, God only survives, unchangeable. Whoever comes to the feast of life must, before it is over, drink from the cup of death. He who arrives at the inn of mortality must one day inevitably take his departure from that house of sorrow—the world. How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy!

With fame, even if I die, I am contented ;
Let fame be mine, since my body is death's.

The most High God has been propitious to us, and has now placed us in such a crisis, that if we fall in the field, we die the death of martyr ; if we survive, we rise victorious, the avengers of the cause of God. Let us, then, with one accord, swear on God's holy word, that none of us will even think of turning his face from this warfare, nor desert from the battle and slaughter that ensues, till his soul is separated from his body."

This appeal produced the desired effect and the officers as well as the men swore by the Holy Book to stand by him.

Rana Sanga brought into the field an army which far exceeded that of his adversary in numerical strength. The menace of a foreign invasion had called into existence a powerful confederacy of Rajput chiefs under the leadership of the redoubtable Sanga. Silahadi, the chief of Bhilsa, joined the confederacy with 30 thousand horse, Hasan Khan of Mewat with 12 thousand, Medini Rao of Chanderi with 12 thousand and Rawal Udai Singh of Dungarpur with ten thousand, and Sultan Mahmud Lodi, a son of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, who had been acknowledged as King of Delhi by the Rana also came to take part in the battle at the head of ten thousand mercenaries. There were minor chiefs who brought their forces from four to seven thousand men to swell the ranks of the army. According to Babar's estimate the Rajput army numbered two hundred and one thousand. This is doubtless an exaggerated estimate. The numbers are overrated so far as fighting men are concerned. There may have been numerous camp followers and others, but the main army consisted of nearly 120 thousand horse—a figure mentioned in the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* and accepted by Erskine. Babar's army

was encamped near Khanwah, a village at a distance of ten miles from Sikri. Preparations were vigorously made to put the troops in order. Babar divided them into three sections—the right, centre and left. He entrusted the right wing to Humayun, the left to his brother-in-law Saiyyad Mehdi Khwaja, both of whom were assisted by tried and capable officers. The centre was commanded by himself with his trusty Begs, and on the right and left were posted two flanking parties (*tulughma*) to charge on the enemy's flank and rear in the heat of battle. The artillery men and musketeers were posted along the front of the line protected by chained waggons and breastworks, and 'Ustad Ali was ordered to occupy a position in front of the centre with the heavy ordnance.

It was on Saturday, the 16th of March, 1527, that the two armies came face to face with each other. The battle began at 9 or 9-30 in the morning and lasted till evening. Babar employed the same tactics as at Panipat and caused a terrible confusion in the Rana's army. But nothing could bend the spirit of the Rajputs who at first swept away the enemy by the sheer weight of numbers. Towards evening the day was decided. The Rajputs suffered a terrible defeat and broke up in panic. The field was strewn with human corpses and so were the roads to Biyana and Alwar. The slaughter was fearful, and among those who perished in the conflict were Hasan Khan Mewati, Rawal Udai Singh of Dungarpur and a number of lesser chieftains. Rana Sanga escaped from the field through the efforts of his followers and sought refuge in one of his hill fortresses. Babar ordered a tower of skulls to be built on a mound near the camp and assumed the title of *Ghazi* or champion of the Faith. The Rajput annals ascribe Rana Sanga's defeat to the treachery of a Rajput chief who had joined as an ally, but there is no foundation for this view. However that may be, the battle of Khanwah is one of the decisive battles of Indian history. Professor Rushbrook-

Williams has described its importance in a passage which is worthy of reproduction :—

> "In the first place, the menace of Rajput supremacy which had loomed large before the eyes of Muhammadans in India for the last few years, was removed once for all. The powerful confederacy, which depended so largely for its unity upon the strength and reputation of Mewar, was shattered by a single great defeat, and ceased henceforth to be a dominant factor in the politics of Hindustan. Secondly, the Mughal empire of India was soon firmly established. Babar had definitely seated himself upon the throne of Sultan Ibrahim, and the sign and seal of his achievement had been the annihilation of Sultan Ibrahim's most formidable antagonists. Hitherto, the occupation of Hindustan might have been looked upon as a mere episode in Babar's career of adventure ; but from henceforth it becomes the keynote of his activities for the remainder of his life. His days of wandering in search of a fortune are now passed away : the fortune is his, and he has but to show himself worthy of it. And it is significant of the new stage in his career which this battle marks that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field. Fighting there is, and fighting in plenty, to be done ; but it is fighting for the extension of his power, for the reduction of rebels, for the ordering of his kingdom. It is never fighting for his throne. And it is also significant of Babar's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan."[8]

The Rajput confederacy was broken up but Babar was not

[8] Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century, pp. 156-57.

yet complete master of Hindustan. He must subdue several chieftains before he could claim to be a sovereign in the full sense of the term. Professor Rushbrook-Williams in reviewing Babar's position after the battle of Khanwah argues that he had not merely to conquer a kingdom but to recreate a theory of kingship. He speaks of Ibrahim's failure to restore to the Sultanate of Delhi that absolute authority which it had possessed in the days of the Tughluqs. He found it impossible to do so because his government was not a 'divine inheritance' but a 'human concession.' The Afghan ruler was only *primus inter pares*, and the division of the empire into fiefs managed by barons who were virtually independent further tended to undermine people's belief in the mysterious divinity that hedgeth round the person of a king. Babar discarded the title of Sultan and called himself a Padshah. It is not that this declaration made the office sacrosanct in the eyes of ambitious men, for only after ten years Humayun was expelled from the throne in spite of his 'divine inheritance and Timurid descent. But it served a great need of the time. It proclaimed to the world that Babar meant to be something more than a mere Sultan, a full-fledged despot determined to sweep away all vestige of independence and co-ordinate authority. It emphasised his appreciation of the need for a centralised government in the midst of warring factions and tribes. Ideas rule mankind and subsequent generations were delighted to snatch a glimpse of their king from the Jharokha window with the same reverence and devotion as they showed towards the Deity.

Babar's conception of Kingship.

One of the chief strongholds of the Rajputs was Chanderi which was in the possession of Medini Rao. Babar marched against him and reached Chanderi on January 20, 1528. Medini Rao shut himself in the fort with 5,000 of his followers. Babar offered him a Jagir in lieu of Chanderi but he refused to enter into a

Reduces the fort of Chanderi.

treaty with him. Just at this time news came from the east that the Afghans had defeated the royal army and compelled it to leave Lakhnau (Lucknow) and fall back on Kanauj. Babar kept his head cool in spite of this disquieting news, and pushed on the siege of Chanderi. The fort was attacked on all sides with such vigour that the Rajputs, when they saw no hope of escape practised the usual rite of *Jauhar* and with great gallantry drove the enemy along the ramparts. A brilliant assault followed, and the fort was captured by Babar. Soon after this died the valiant Rana Sanga and his death marked the final collapse of the Rajput confederacy. The rebellious Afghan barons were subdued, and Babar enjoyed an interval of quiet till the end of the year 1528.

Battle of the Gogra, 1529.

But the Afghan danger was not yet over. Mahmud Lodi, brother of Ibrahim, had seized Bihar and a large part of the eastern country had declared for him. Babar sent his son Askari with a force against the rebellious leader and himself followed a little later. On hearing of his approach the enemy melted away, and as Babar passed Allahabad, Chunar and Benares on his way to Buxar, several Afghan chiefs waited upon him and made their submission. Mahmud, deserted by his chief supporters, found refuge in Bengal. The ruler of Bengal, Nusrat Shah, had given Babar an assurance of his good-will, but his troops gave shelter to the fugitive Afghan prince. Babar marched towards Bengal, and defeated the Afghans in the famous battle of the Gogra on May 6, 1529. This victory ruined the hopes of the Lodis, and brought to Babar the submission of several leading Afghan barons. He marched back to Agra evidently satisfied with the result of his brilliant campaign.

Last years.

After the battle of Khanwah Humayun was sent to Kabul where trouble was apprehended, but his failure against the Uzbegs greatly disappointed Babar, and he determined to set out in person to put in

order the trans-Hindukush part of his empire. He proceeded as far as Lahore, but declining health prevented him from going further. About this time a plot was formed to place on the throne, to the exclusion of Babar's legitimate heirs, Mahdi Khwaja, a brother-in-law of Babar and a nobleman of high rank, who held the fief of Etawah. When Humayun learnt of this plot, he left Badakhshan in spite of the requests of the Badakhshanis to the contrary and arrived at Agra and successfully frustrated the attempts of the conspirators. He went to his Jagir at Sambhal where after some time in the hot weather of 1530 he fell seriously ill. Babar was much upset by this illness and offered to sacrifice his life in order to save that of his son. His nobles implored him to desist from such a course and suggested that the precious diamond seized at Agra might be given away, but he held it a poor compensation for the life of his son. It is said he walked three times round the bed of Humayun and prayed to God to transfer the disease to him. Immediately he was heard to say, so strong was the force of will, "I have borne it away! I have borne it away!" From that moment, Muhammadan historians tell us, Humayun recovered his health and Babar who had already been ill declined more and more.

A sudden disorder of the bowels completely prostrated him and he felt certain of approaching death. Calling his chiefs together he asked them to acknowledge Humayun as his successor and to co-operate with him in managing his kingdom. Then he turned towards Humayun and addressed to him the following words :—

> "I commit to God's keeping you and your brothers and all my kinsfolk and your people and my people ; and all of these I confide to you."

Three days later he passed away on December 26, 1530. His death was at first kept a secret, but after some time Araish

Khan, one of the nobles of Hind, pointed out the unwisdom of such an act. He reminded the nobles of the practice of the bazar people to rob and steal in such circumstances and warned them of the consequences of concealment. He suggested that a man should be seated on an elephant, and he should go about the town proclaiming that the emperor had become a *darvesh*, and had given the kingdom to his son Humayun. Humayun agreed to this. The populace was reassured by the proclamation, and all prayed for his welfare.[9] Thus Humayun ascended the throne on December 29, 1530, and gave assurance of his sympathy and good-will by allowing every one 'to keep the office and service, and lands, and residence which he had enjoyed during his father's régime.'[10]

Babar's body was first laid in Rambagh or Arambagh at Agra on the bank of the Jumna, but later it was removed to Kabul according to his instructions and was buried in a place chosen by himself.[11]

Administration.

Babar had no time to devise new laws or establish institutions for the governance of the wide dominions which he had won by the power of his sword. He accepted the system which he found in vogue in Hindustan, and parcelled out his empire into fiefs which he entrusted to Jagirdars dependent upon himself. It is true they did not enjoy the same degree of independence as they had enjoyed under the Lodis, but the defects of the system were obvious. What strikes us in Babar's reign is the financial deficit caused by his lavish generosity and the unsettled condi-

[9] Gulbadan, Humayunama, pp. 109-10.

[10] Ibid, p. 110.

[11] Kabul was the place he loved most in his dominions. He was enthusiastic in its praise and wrote: 'The climate is extremely delightful, and there is no such place in the known world.' On another occasion he said: 'Drink wine in the Citadel of Kabul, and send round the cup without stopping, for it is at once mountain and stream, town and desert.'

tion of the country. He had remitted the stamp duty levied on the Muslims on the eve of the battle of Khanwah.[12] He had so recklessly distributed the treasure found at Delhi and Agra that he was obliged to have recourse to additional taxation in order to obtain the necessary equipment for the army. Every man having an office in the various departments of the state was required to bring to the Diwan a hundred and thirty instead of a hundred to help in procuring the right kind of arms and supplies for the army.[13] The results of this financial breakdown were seen in the reign of his successor and we may agree with Professor Rushbrook-Williams when he says that he 'bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions, which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate.'[14]

Babar's account of Hindustan.

Babar briefly dwells upon the political situation at the time of his invasion and gives a highly detailed and minute account of the flora and fauna of Hindustan. He makes mention of mountains, rivers, jungles and the various kinds of vegetables, fruits and food-stuffs. He expresses a poor opinion of the people of Hindustan which is wholly exaggerated. His stay in India was much too short to enable him to acquaint himself fully and accurately with the ideas and habits of the natives of the country. This is what he writes :—

"Hindustan is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society, of frankly mixing together or of familiar intercourse. They have no genius, no compre-

12 King, Memoirs II, p. 281.

13 Ibid., p. 345.

14 Empire builder of the Sixteenth Century, p. 162.

hension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture ; they have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazars, no baths or colleges, no candles, no torches, not a candlestick. Instead of a candle or torch, you have a gang of dirty fellows, whom they call *divatis,* who hold in their left hand a kind of small tripod, to the side of one leg of which, it being wooden, they stick a piece of iron like the top of candlestick ; they fasten a pliant wick, of the size of the middle finger, by an iron pin, to another of the legs. In their right hand they hold a gourd, in which they have made a hole for the purpose of pouring out oil in a small stream, and whenever the wick requires oil, supply it from this gourd. Their great men kept a hundred or two hundred of these *divatis.*"[15]

He goes on to add that they have no aqueducts or canals in their gardens or palaces and in their buildings there is neither elegance nor regularity. Their peasants and the lower classes all go about naked and use only a *langoti* to cover their nakedness. The chief excellence of Hindustan consists in the fact that there is an abundance of gold and silver in the country. The climate is very pleasant during the rains. There is no dearth of workmen of every profession and trade and they are always open to engagement. Occupations are mostly hereditary and for particular kinds of work particular sets of people are reserved.

According to Babar the countries from Bhereh to Bihar which were included in his empire yielded a revenue of 52 crores of which parganas yielding about eight or nine crores

15 King, Memoirs II, pp. 141-42.

are in the possession of Rajas and Rais who had always been loyal to the power at Delhi.[16]

Babar's autobiography.

Babar's autobiography (*Babarnamah*) originally written in Turki is a book of surpassing interest. It faithfully describes the worlds in which Babar lived and the persons with whom he came in contact. As we read through it we feel the spell of his charming personality and the force of his intelligent mind grasping military situations with the acuteness of a consummate general. No eastern prince has written such a vivid, interesting and veracious account of his life as Babar. He describes his own shortcomings with a candour which greatly impresses us. His style is not pompous or ornate like that of the Persian writers. It is simple, clear and forcible and its effect is considerably enhanced by the utter lack of cant and hypocrisy.

Babar had a great regard for truth, for he writes: 'I do not write this in order to make complaint; I have written the plain truth. I do not set down these matters in order to make known my desserts; I have set down exactly what happened. In this history I have held firmly to it that the truth should be reached in any matter, and that every act should be recorded precisely as it occurred.' It is this which has made the Memoirs a thing of eternal interest. As Lane-Poole puts it in his own felicitous language, the pomp and power of Babar's dynasty are gone, but the record of his life—the *littera scripta* that mocks at time—remains unaltered and imperishable.

The *Memoirs* were translated by Humayun from an original in Babar's own handwriting in 1553, and were afterwards trans-

16 King, Memoirs I, pp. 242—4. These figures are unreliable though Babar says (II, p. 425) he has verified them. The detailed statement of Babar's revenue, though not given in the Persian version of his *Memoirs*, is found in the Turki original and is reproduced in the French edition.

lated into Persian by Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan in the time of Akbar in 1590. The Persian translation is faithful and accurate, and the variations that occur are of idiom and not of detail. Several translations of the *Memoirs* have appeared in European languages in modern times.

Personality of Babar.

Babar is one of the most interesting figures in the whole range of mediæval history. As a prince, warrior, and scholar he is fit to take rank with the greatest rulers of mediæval times. The trials and adventures of his early life had strengthened every fibre of his bodily frame and had developed in him the qualities of patience, endurance, courage and self-reliance. Adversity is a true school of greatness, and Babar had fully profited by the good and bad chances of life. He loved game and hunting expeditions, and often in the coldest winter he rode long distances in pursuit of wild animals, and fully enjoyed his excursions with his comrades. So great was his physical strength that with one man under each arm he could run along the rampart without the least inconvenience and risk. He was fond of river bath, and was once seen plunging recklessly into an ice-bound stream with temperature below zero. He was gifted by nature with an extraordinary amount of energy, self-confidence, and the power to instil hope and enthusiasm into the hearts of his men, when they failed or faltered before a formidable foe. He loved field sports and was a skilful swordsman and archer. The elasticity of his mind enabled him to pass from the wine cup to the blockade of a fortress with the greatest alacrity and cheerfulness. His methods of war were those that had been prevalent in Central Asia among the Mongols and Turks, but he had brought about alterations in them, and had so perfected his artillery branch that he was hard to beat in battle. His military discipline was severe, and though at times he burst into ferocity he was generally humane and kind-hearted. He did not allow his soldiers to devastate

the conquered countries and severely punished those who disobeyed his orders.

He was the happy compound of a great prince and a good man. His temper was frank, jovial, and buoyant and it retained its buoyancy to the end of his life. No distress or misfortune could disturb its equanimity and whether on the field of battle or on the edge of a precipice in the hilly country he moved forward with a merry heart. He strictly observed the sanctity of the plighted word, and even in dealing with his enemies he never had recourse to treachery or foul play. He hated ingratitude and expected all men to stand by their friends in time of need and to keep their word.

He treated his enemies with a magnanimity rare among his contemporaries in Central Asia. He was kind to his brothers and when urged to get rid of his brother Jahangir by one of his advisers he replied : ' Urge it as he would, I did not accept his suggestion, because it is against my nature to do an injury to my brethren, older or younger, or to any kinsmen so ever, even when something untoward has happened.' His loyalty towards his kinsmen and friends was conspicuous. He treated his Chaghtai kinsmen with great kindness, and Mirza Haidar Daghlat effusively speaks of the generous treatment which he received at his hands. The hardships of life had perhaps convinced him of the necessity of affection and of nurturing kindly sentiments within him. From his own experience he had learnt the value of kindness and fidelity, and recognised the importance of mutual good-will in social welfare. He writes of his father, mother, grandmothers, and sisters in terms of affection, and weeps for days together for a playmate of his earlier days. It is this human trait, so rare among the Mongols and Turks, which makes Babar's personality a subject of absorbing interest.

A word might be said about Babar's attitude towards the three common things in which the Muslim world of gaity and

fashion took delight—wine, women, and song. Wine-drinking was a universal practice in Babar's days and the *Memoirs* speak with perfect frankness of Babar's own indulgence in liquor. But even in drink he observed decorum and asked his followers 'to carry their liquor like gentlemen.' When they became senseless under the influence of liquor and 'foul-mouthed and idiotic,' he disliked them and disapproved of their conduct. We find him at these drinking parties a strange, happy figure. He drinks copiously but never neglects his business and is seen at a bound in his saddle when his services are needed in a raid or campaign. Several times he resolved to abstain from liquor, but such vows were more honoured in the breach than in the observance. He would keep the vow for two or three days and then break it at the sight of the crystal waters of a limpid stream or a mountain spring. It was at Sikri when he found himself against the Rajput odds that he made a vigorous effort of will to give up wine and asked his friends and followers to do likewise. This was his final renunciation. Even as a drunkard Babar is fascinating in a group of 'noble and illustrious drinkers' who regarded wine as the necessary concomitant of a joyous gathering.

Babar fully acknowledged his debt to his grandmother and showed much filial devotion towards his parents, but like Napoleon Bonaparte he held in contempt those who allowed women to interfere in political affairs or involved themselves in feminine intrigues. He disliked termagant women and favoured the repression of feminine loquacity.[17]

17 About such women he endorsed the view expressed in these words :

"A bad wife in a good man's house
Even in this world, makes a hell on earth."

"May the Almighty remove such a visitation from every good Muslim ; and God grant that such a thing as an ill-tempered, cross-grained wife be not left in the world."

King, Memoirs I, p. 296.

The Mongols and Turks of the fifteenth century were not very particular about their morals. Pederasty was a common vice among the Turks and Babar speaks of the practice with his usual frankness. It was a fashion to keep concubines and prostitutes, but Babar's life was so occupied in sieges and battles that he had no time to enjoy himself like other eastern rulers. The exigencies of the situation at any rate in Hindustan enforced abstinence from sensual pleasures, and Babar always exercised self-restraint when it was necessary to do so. He was fond of music both vocal and instrumental, and himself composed songs, some of which have come down to us.

Babar was an orthodox Sunni in his religious views, but his culture saved him from being a zealot or a fanatic like Mahmud of Ghazni or a ruthless conqueror like his great ancestor, Timur, the lame. He looked upon Shias as 'rank heretics' and the 'followers of an evil belief opposed to the pure faith.' He writes of the Hindus with contempt and recognises *Jihad* as a sacred duty. In describing Rana Sanga's military resources and his gallantry in the field of battle he uses language which does little credit to his culture, but that was the usual practice of the age. He ordered towers of 'pagan skulls' to be built both at Sikri and Chanderi and showed no quarter to the idolators who opposed him. But there was no systematic persecution of the Hindus during his reign and he never punished men merely on grounds of religion. Himself a great believer in Allah, he ascribed all his success to His goodness and mercy and regarded sovereignty as a gift from Him. In the heat of battle he looked to God for help for all his battles were fought in His cause. His belief in the efficacy of prayer was immense as is illustrated by the manner in which he sacrificed himself to save the life of his son.

He was a passionate lover of nature and found the greatest pleasure in the streams, meadows and pasture lands of his native country. Springs, lakes, plants, flowers and fruits—all

had their charm for him, so much so, indeed, that even when he was in Hindustan he never forgot the melons of Farghānā, the grapes and pomegranates of Kabul and the lands beyond the Oxus. It was this love of nature which called into play his poetic powers. He possessed a fine intellect and a rich imagination which were utilised to the best advantage in depicting the scenes amidst which he moved and in portraying the persons whom he knew. Babar was a poet of no mean order. He had cultivated poetry from his early youth, and his *Diwan* or collection of Turki poems is regarded as a work of considerable merit. He wrote in a pure and unaffected style and composed odes and songs with great facility. He knew the sacred function of poetry, and writes that it would be a pity if the tongue is wasted on satirical or frivolous poems. He always adhered to the view that the language of poetry should be the vehicle of noble thought. His mastery over prose was equally remarkable. He could write with ease both in Turki and Persian, and like all cultured men of the east practised calligraphy. He was an adept in describing countries, their climate and peculiar geographical features, and his fastidiousness in valuing the compositions of others would call forth the blushes of a tutor in a modern university. On one occasion he reprimanded Humayun for writing his letters carelessly and advised him to cultivate a plain and unaffected style. The most remarkable of his prose works is the *Memoirs* of his own life, which will remain for all time a first-rate authority on the history of Babar's reign and a source of inspiration to those who wish to carve out a career for themselves notwithstanding adverse circumstances.

Babar was unquestionably superior to the other Muslim rulers of his age. It is true he was sometimes cruel and recked little of human life, but such occasions were few and far between. As a rule he never slew men wantonly. But what endears him to us, in spite of the lapse of centuries, is his deep

and genuine sincerity which adds a great deal to the nobility of his character. Indeed, there are few princes in Asiatic history who can be ranked higher than Babar in genius and accomplishments.

CHAPTER XIII

HUMAYUN AND SHER SHAH

Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad Humayun ascended the throne at Agra on the 29th December, 1530, in the midst of great public rejoicings. He had been charged by Babar on his death-bed to treat his brothers with affection and Humayun acted on this advice to his great detriment. Most of his troubles and misfortunes sprang from his brothers, and his own treatment was responsible for their sinister designs. The first thing which he did after the fashion of the Timurids was to divide his father's dominions among members of the blood royal. Kamran was confirmed in his possession of Kabul and Qandhar; Sambhal was given to Mirza Askari, and Alwar and Mewat were allotted to Mirza Hindāl, while Badakhshan was entrusted to the charge of his cousin Sulaiman Mirza. The leading nobles and military leaders were conciliated by means of large gifts and rewards.

Humayun's difficulties.

Soon after his accession Humayun discovered that the throne of Delhi was not a bed of roses. The difficulties which surrounded the new king were of no mean order. There was no law of primogeniture among the Muslims, and every prince of the royal house aspired to dominion. Often the claims of rival aspirants were settled by an appeal to the sword. The large gifts, granted to princes, stimulated their political ambitions and furnished them with the sinews of war which they freely employed against their opponents. The loyalty of the army could not always be relied upon. It was a heterogeneous mass of men belonging to various nationalities. The Chaghtai, the Uzbeg, the Mughal, the Persian and Afghan soldiers fought well, but they were too prone to quarrel amongst

themselves, and their counsels were almost always characterised by a woeful lack of unanimity. They plotted and intrigued to push forward their own men and frequently sacrificed the interests of the whole for the interest of the part. There were powerful Khans at court who did not consider the acquisition of a kingdom or empire beyond the scope of their ambitions. The intrigues of these men were bound to embarrass any ruler, however capable or vigilant.

There were other difficulties. Babar had no time to consolidate his possessions, and the majority of his subjects who were Hindus looked upon their conquerors as successful barbarians. In the East the Afghans were fomenting strife, and Mahmud Lodi was wandering in Bihar trying to rally to his side the Afghan nobles who were anxious to regain their lost power. Sher Khan had already entered upon a military career of great promise and was making efforts to organize the Afghans into a nation. In Gujarat Bahadur Shah had greatly increased his power and was maturing his plans for the conquest of Rajputana. He possessed enormous wealth which afterwards enabled him to finance the anti-Mughal movement started in Bihar and Bengal by the great Afghan who finally succeeded in expelling Humayun from Hindustan.

Concession of Kamran.

At the time of Babar's death Kamran was in Kabul. Having entrusted his territories to the care of Askari he marched towards Hindustan at the head of a considerable force and gave out that he was coming to congratulate his brother on the assumption of royal dignity. Humayun who knew him too well to be deceived by these effusive expressions of loyalty sent an envoy in advance to inform him that he had already decided to add Peshawar and Lamghan to the fief of Kabul. But Kamran was not satisfied with this offer and marched down to the Indus. He captured Lahore and brought the whole of the Punjab under his sway. Humayun who was not prepared for war

acquiesced in this forcible seizure, and allowed him to enjoy the kingdoms of Kabul, Qandhar and the Punjab. It was a mistake on Humayun's part to make these concessions because they erected a barrier between him and the lands beyond the Afghan hills. Kamran could henceforward, as Professor Rushbrook-Williams observes, cut the taproot of Humayun's military power by merely stopping where he was. Besides, the cession of Hisar Firoza was a blunder, for it gave Kamran command of the new military road which ran from Delhi to Qandhar.

One of the most formidable enemies of Humayun was Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. He was making vigorous efforts to increase his power. Early in 1531 he invaded Malwa along with the Rana of Mewar on the ground that the ruler of that country had given shelter to his brother, Chand Khan, a rival claimant to the throne of Gujarat. Malwa was conquered and the Sultan was sent as a prisoner to Champanir. The kings of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar and Berar were humbled by him and made to acknowledge his supremacy. The Portuguese also feared his growing power and paid homage to him. With great resources at his command Bahadur turned against the Rana of Chittor who was compelled to agree to terms which were 'ruinous alike to his pride and his pocket.'

Bahadur Shah of Gujarat.

Emboldened by this success, Bahadur began to prepare himself for bigger enterprise. The Afghan chiefs like Alam Khan, the uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, who had sought refuge with him, solicited his aid in driving the Chaghtais out of India. Equally dangerous were the intrigues of the Mughal nobles who had fled to his court and who confirmed the view that the conquest of Hindustan could be easily accomplished. Humayun wrote to Bahadur to dismiss the fugitives but he refused to do so. This was the immediate cause of war.

Humayun marched against the nobles of Gujarat and

defeated them. Bahadur hurried back to the scene of action from Chittor on hearing this news but he was defeated and the Mughals captured immense booty. He fled to Champanir but Humayun followed close upon his heels with a powerful force. Bahadur then left for Diu without offering any resistance and opened negotiations with the Portuguese.

Humayun meanwhile laid siege to the fort of Champanir and captured it after four months' blockade. But the Mughals were so elated with success that they wasted their time in feasting and merriment. Bahadur profited by this supine inaction of his enemies and at once sent his officer Imad-ul-mulk who occupied Ahmadabad and collected a large army to fight for his master. The Portuguese governor also promised aid in return for the permission which he had given to fortify his settlement.

This roused Humayun from his lethargy. He marched against Imad-ul-mulk and defeated him. The country was made over to his brother Mirza Askari who proved an incapable and tactless governor. He quarrelled with his own officers and did nothing to effect a peaceful settlement of the country. Bahadur took advantage of these dissensions in the enemy's camp and advanced towards Ahmadabad. The Mughal general surrendered Champanir into his hands, and gradually the whole country came under his control. But he did not live to enjoy the fruits of his victory. He was invited by the Portuguese governor to a conference, but in a scuffle which ensued between the Portuguese and his men, Bahadur who suspected treachery fell into the sea and was drowned in 1537. Humayun who was at Mandu withdrew to Agra, and as soon as he did so Malwa was also lost.

Thus the emperor's own lethargy and indecision ruined his prestige in the north. The Afghans slowly increased their strength, and with the help of their leader Sher Khan began to prepare themselves for a trial of strength with the Mughals.

The original name of Sher Shah was Farid. His father Hasan was a Jagirdar of Sassaram in Bihar. The exact date of his birth is not known, but it is probable that he was born some time about the year 1486 A.D. In his early boyhood Farid was neglected by his father who was a slave to his youngest wife and showed a preference to his sons by the latter. But this petticoat influence proved a blessing in disguise. Disgusted by the conduct of his step-mother and infatuated father, Farid left his home and went to Jaunpur where he applied himself to the study of letters. Being a precocious lad, he devoted himself to the study of Arabic and Persian with great zeal, and soon acquired a mastery over these two languages. He committed to memory the *Gulistān, Bostān* and *Sikandarnamah* and enriched his wonderfully quick mind with vast stores of polite learning. He studied literature and history and took a keen delight in reading of the noble deeds and virtues of great rulers in the past. Impressed by Farid's talents, his father's patron Jamāl Khan, the governor of Bihar, asked him to behave better towards his son who held out ample promise of future greatness.

Early career of Sher Shah.

Hasan was reconciled, and he entrusted his jagir to his ambitious son. Farid managed the jagir well, but the jealousy of his step-mother again drove him into voluntary exile. He took service under Bihār Khan, son of Darya Khan Lohani, governor of Bihar, who was much impressed by his talents. On one occasion when Bihār went out on a hunting expedition Farid slew a tiger, and in recognition of this brave deed his master gave him the title of Sher Khan. But differences having arisen soon afterwards between him and Farid, the latter resigned his service and went to Agra where he was introduced to Babar by one of his leading nobles. When Babar undertook the subjugation of the Afghans in the east, Sher Khan rendered him great assistance and received in return his father's jagir.

Babar had restored Jalal Khan, son of Bihār Khan, to his father's possessions after the death of the latter, but he was a minor, and his affairs were managed by Sher Khan. When Jalal came of age he wished to free himself from the galling tutelage of the powerful Afghan chief who held him in leading strings. He sought the help of the ruler of Bengal in accomplishing his object but all his efforts failed. Sher Khan defeated the forces of the two allies and Bihar easily came into his hands.

Sher Khan was not the man to rest on his oars. He now turned his attention towards Bengal. He dashed through the country and easily overpowered the resistance offered by the Bengal troops so that by the end of February 1536, he appeared before the walls of Gaur. Mahmud, the king of Bengal, offered no resistance and bribed Sher Khan to retire. Next year Sher Khan again marched towards Gaur, but the Bengalis showed little courage, and the Afghans entered the city in triumph. When Humayun heard of Sher Khan's success in Bengal, he advanced towards Gaur, but the wily Afghan retreated towards Bihar and eluded his pursuers. The Mughals captured Gaur and re-named it Jannatabad. Sher Khan tried to compensate himself for this loss by seizing imperial territories in Bihar and Jaunpur and plundered the country as far as Kanauj.

As soon as Humayun heard of Sher Khan's activities in Bihar and Jaunpur, he left Gaur and marching hastily along the banks of the Ganges, crossed near Munghir. He was confronted with a difficult situation. Attempts were made to make peace with Sher Khan but in vain. The Afghans rallied round their leader in large numbers and defeated the Mughals at Chausa. The emperor fought with great gallantry but his example produced no effect on his followers. At last he plunged into the river on horseback and was about to be drowned when he was saved by a water-carrier, Nizam, whom he afterwards allowed to sit on the throne for two days, and asked the nobles to make obeisance to him.

The battle of Chausa was a clear advantage to Sher Khan. He now took the title of Sher Shah and ordered the coins to be struck and the Khutba to be read in his own name. All thought of acknowledging the emperor's suzerainty now vanished from his mind and in order to legalise his assumption of the royal title he went through all the formalities of kingship.

Battle of Kanauj, May 1540.

Humayun was now convinced of Sher Shah's formidable power. He saw clearly that success against him was impossible without unity of plan and purpose. He tried his best to win his brothers to his side, but they were so faithless that they not only refused him co-operation but positively hampered him in his preparations. Encouraged by the dissensions of the brothers Sher Shah advanced to the bank of the Ganges and crossed it with his forces. Humayun also led his army to the Ganges near Kanauj and encamped opposite to Sher Shah. The two armies, the strength of which is estimated by Mirza Haider, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, at 200,000 men, remained in this position for one month. But desertions in the imperial army added to the anxiety of Humayun, and he decided to risk a battle rather than allow the army to be destroyed without fighting. The Mughals employed their usual tactics but they were severely beaten by the Afghans. Mirza Haider who took part in the campaign writes: ". . . Sher Khan gained a victory, while the Chaghtias were defeated in the battlefield, where not a man either friend or foe was wounded. Not a gun was fired and the chariots (*gardun*) were useless."

Now this statement of Mirza Haider may be exaggerated, but there is no doubt that the battle was not half so bloody as the battle of Panipat and Khanwah. The imperialists were driven into the river, and the Afghans inflicted heavy losses upon them from behind. The Mughals failed disastrously to retrieve their position and Humayun was reduced to the position of a helpless fugitive.

During his pursuit of the emperor in the Punjab Sher Shah turned his attention to the Gakkar country, a mountainous region between the upper courses of the rivers Indus and Jhelum. The occupation of this tract of land was highly important for strategic reasons. An invader from the north-west could easily pass through this country and establish himself in the Punjab. Sher Shah's fears were well-founded, for Kamran and Mirza Haider, two of his important enemies who held Kabul and Kashmir respectively, might combine at any time and jeopardise his safety. Sher Shah ravaged the country, but he was suddenly called away by the rebellion of the governor of Bengal. He left his able generals behind with 50,000 men to subdue the country of the Gakkars.

Other conquests of Sher Shah.

Malwa, Raisin, and Sindh were conquered next and then Sher Shah turned against Maldeva of Jodhpur. It was impossible for him to tolerate the existence of a powerful chieftain whose kingdom was situated not far from the capital. He marched towards Marwar at the head of a large army and pushed on to Mairta, 4 miles west of Ajmer. The Rajputs had gathered in large numbers and were so well organized that Sher Shah began to feel doubts about his success in the campaign. He had recourse to treachery when valour seemed useless.

He caused letters to be forged in the name of Maldeva's nobles to the effect: 'Let not the King permit any anxiety or doubt to find its way to his heart. During the battle we will seize Maldeva and bring him to you.'[1] Having enclosed these letters in a *kharītā* (a silken bag) he gave it to a certain person and directed him to drop it near the tent of the *vakil* of Maldeva. When the contents of these letters became known to him, he suspected treachery on the part of his nobles. He

1 Elliot, IV, p. 405.

forthwith decided to retreat in spite of their assurances that their loyalty was as firm as a rock. But Maldeva who was seized with panic did not listen to their protestations. The pride of the Rajputs was touched to the quick and some of his chiefs felt this stain on their honour to be unbearable. With desperate courage they fell upon the enemy and according to Abbās 'displayed exceeding valour.' A deadly encounter followed (March 1544) and though the noble band perished, the Afghans were slain in large numbers. The valour of the Rajputs deeply impressed Sher Shah who was heard to say, 'I had nearly lost the empire of Hindustan for a handful of Bājrā (millet).'

After this victory Sher Shah captured Mount Abu and from there proceeded against Marwar. Maldeva fled from Jodhpur and retired to the fort of Siwana whither he was not followed by the Afghans. The fort of Chittor was captured soon afterwards and was entrusted to an Afghan nobleman. In this way Sher Shah succeeded in establishing his hold on Rajputana.

The last expedition in which Sher Shah took part was against the Raja of Kalanjar. The Rajputs rolled down stones upon the besiegers from the parapet of the fortress and made their task exceedingly difficult. The siege was pushed on but when victory was in sight, Sher Shah was suddenly burnt by an explosion of gunpowder. The fort was captured and the Afghans entered it in triumph. Sher Shah's condition grew worse and he died on May 22, 1545, with the laurels of victory on his brow.

Nature of Sher Shah's despotism.

The government of Sher Shah, though autocratic, was vigorous and enlightened. He was not content merely with the establishment of peace and order, but reconstructed the machinery of administration. In spite of the limitations which hampered a sixteenth century king in India he brought to bear

upon his task the intelligence, the ability, the devotion of the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century in Europe. He did not listen to the advice of the 'Ulama and adopted a policy of religious toleration towards the Hindus. He looked into the pettiest details of administration and steadily fixed his eye on the public weal. He kept a vigilant watch on his *walis, iqtadars* and *naibs* and freely punished them when they transgressed his rules. The Afghans fully appreciated his creative genius and looked upon him as a saviour of their race. It was this sense of thoughtful gratitude, fortified and developed by his comprehensive and liberal administrative reforms, which led them to render unto him their sincere homage and goodwill.

Civil Administration.

The whole empire was divided into 47 divisions each of which comprised a large number of *parganas*. Abbas writes that there were 113,000 parganas, but he has probably made a confusion between the *parganas* and villages. This figure represents the number of villages in the empire and not of *parganas*, which could not have been so many at the time. Each *pargana* had a *shiqdār*, an *amin*, a treasurer, a *munsif*, a Hindi writer and a Persian writer to write accounts. Besides these officers of the state there were the *Patwari, Chowdhri* and the *Muqaddam* who acted as intermediaries between the people and the state. The *shiqdar* was a soldier, the *amin* a civilian whose main function was the assessment and collection of land revenue. The *shiqdār's* duty was to enforce the royal *farmans* and to give military assistance to the *amin* when he needed it. The *amin* was the principal civil officer and was responsible to the central government for his actions. The *parganas* were grouped into *sarkars*, each of which had a *shiqdār-i-shiqdārān* (Shiqdar-in-chief) and a *Munsif-i-munsifān* (Munsif-in-chief) who looked after the work of the *pargana* officers throughout their division. Their duty was to watch

the conduct of both the *āmils* and the people, to settle disputes regarding the boundaries of the *parganas* and to punish any acts of lawlessness on the part of the people. The *āmils* were frequently transferred after one or two years from one place to another and loyal and experienced officers were treated with special favour.

Before the time of Sher Shah, the land was not measured and the present, past and probable future state of a *pargana* was ascertained from the *Qānūngo*. Sher Shah ordered an accurate survey of all land in the empire. The land was measured at harvest time and the state demand was fixed at one-third of the expected produce.[2] It was payable in cash or kind. The revenue was realised by the *muqaddams* who were given a share of the produce, but the ryots were sometimes allowed to pay to the treasury direct. Sher Shah was very careful of the interests of the cultivators. The revenue officers were asked to be lenient at the time of assessment but they were to show no mercy at the time of collection. When there was drought or any other unforeseen calamity advances were made to the cultivators to relieve distress.

Land Revenue.

Sher Shah was much impressed by Alauddin's military system and adopted its main principles. He wished to make the army efficient and truly imperial in spirit. The *mansabdāri* system did not exist, for the Afghans were too proud to accept such gradations of service. The army was distributed over different parts of the country

The Army.

[2] It is stated in the *Ain* that cash rates were fixed for a few special crops, mainly vegetables, but for all the principal staples, the 'good,' 'middling,' and 'bad' yields per bigha were added up, one-third of the total was reckoned as the average produce (*mahsūl*), and one-third of this was fixed as the state demand. In certain parts of the empire such as Multan the state demand was fixed at one-fourth also.—Moreland: The Agrarian Systems of Moslem India, p. 76.

and was stationed in cantonments of which Delhi and Rohtas were the most important. One such division was called *fauj* and was under the command of a *faujdar* whose duties were entirely military. As the clan-feeling was very powerful among the Afghans, the more important tribal chiefs were allowed to keep large forces in their service. The king had also a large army under his direct command ; it amounted to 150,000 cavalry and 25,000 infantry, well trained and accoutred with muskets and bows. The cavalry was highly efficient: horses were trained and their descriptive rolls were prepared. The soldiers were directly recruited by the king himself and salaries were fixed after personal inspection. Sher Shah treated his soldiers with kindness and supplied those who were poor with arms and horses. But his discipline was very severe. They were, during their marches, particularly enjoined not to do any injury to the crops of the cultivators. If the crops of any cultivator were destroyed, he was recompensed by the state for his loss and the wrong-doers were severely punished. When the king accompanied the army, he used to look to the right and left and if he saw any man injuring the crops he cut off his ears with his own hand, and hanging the corn round his neck ordered him to be paraded in the camp. Even when the crops were damaged owing to the narrowness of the road, he sent his officers to estimate the value of the crop and give compensation in money.

Sher Shah dealt out even-handed justice to the high and low, and no man could escape punishment by reason of his birth or rank. There were courts called the *Dārul-adālat* in which the Qazi and the Mir Adl tried civil cases and administered justice. The Hindus probably settled their disputes relating to inheritance, succession and the like in their *Panchayats*, but in criminal cases they were amenable to the law of the state. The criminal law was severe; punishments were harsh and

Justice and Police.

cruel and their object was not to reform the culprit but 'to set an example.' Even theft and robbery were treated as capital offences.

The police organisation of Sher Shah, though promitive in many respects, was highly efficient. He tried to enforce the principle of local responsibility in the matter of preventing crimes. If a theft or robbery occurred within the jurisdiction of an *āmil* or *shiqdār*, and the culprits were not traced, the *muqaddams* were arrested and compelled to make good the loss. When a murder occured and the murderer was not traced, the *muqaddams* were seized as before and asked to produce him. If they failed to produce him or to give his whereabouts, they were themselves put to death. In any case the responsibility of bringing to light an offence rested upon the *muqaddams*, and the regulations of the state operated harshly upon them. But the system resulted in the complete security of life and property. The travellers and wayfarers slept without the least anxiety even in a desert, and the Zamindars themselves kept watch over them for fear of the king. Besides the regular police there were the *Muhatsibs* or censors of public morals, whose duty was to prevent such crimes as drinking and adultery and to enforce the observanve of religious laws. Spies are inevitable in a despotic state, and Sher Shah employed diligent spies who kept him informed of all that happened in his dominions.

The Means of Communication.

The means of communication were very inadequate in the middle ages. Sher Shah was the first Muslim ruler who undertook the construction of roads on a large scale for public convenience. The longest road was that which ran from Sonargaon to the Indus about 1,500 *krohs* in length. There were others, the chief of which were one from Agra to Burhanpur, another from Agra *via* Biyana to the frontier of Marwar and to the fort of Chittor and a fourth from Lahore to Multan, a city of consider-

able military importance on the western frontier. Trees were planted on both sides of the roads, and *sarais* were built at intervals of every two *krohs,* and separate accommodation was provided for Hindus and Muslims. Brahmans were employed for the convenience of the Hindus to supply them with water and to cook their food. For the upkeep of the *sarais* villages were granted by the state. Every *sarai* had a well, a mosque and a staff of officers who were generally an *imām*, a *muazzin* and a number of watermen, who were paid out of the income of the lands attached to the *sarais*. As Mr. Qanungo observes these *sarais* became 'the veritable arteries of the empire, diffusing a new life among its hitherto benumbed limbs.' Market towns grew up around these *sarais* and a brisk trade developed. They served also the purpose of *dak* chowkis, and through them news came to the emperor from the remotest parts of his dominions.

Charitable endowments and grants.

Sher Shah made liberal grants for charitable purposes but he exercised a personal supervision over their management. He often said that it was incumbent upon kings to give grants to *imāms* and holy men for upon them depended the happiness and prosperity of a state. He patronised art and letters and held that it was the duty of kings to afford relief to the poor and the destitute. The whole system of grants was carefully examined and the *imāms* and holy men, who had by bribing the *āmils* acquired possession of more land than really belonged to them, were deprived of such illegitimate acquisitions. To check the fraudulent practices of the grantees he ordered the *munshis* to prepare the *farmans,* examined and sealed them himself and then sent them to his *shiqdārs* for distribution. All grants made by rulers other than the Afghans were cancelled, though the grantees were not wholly deprived of their lands. The principle which he generally observed was that no deserving person should go

unrewarded and no one should have a superfluity of state benefactions. Madrasas and mosques were maintained and stipends were granted to teachers and students. The state established a number of free kitchens the annual expenditure of which in those days, when the value of money was much higher than it is now, amounted to 180,000 *asharfis*. But in dealing with his own tribesmen Sher Shah adopted a policy of favouritism. To the men of the Sūr tribe and his own kinsmen his bounty flowed generously irrespective of desert, and every pious Afghan who came to Hindustan was granted an annuity from the royal treasury. This must have caused discontent among his subjects of which contemporary historians have given no account.

Character of Sher Shah.

Sher Shah has rightly been called one of the greatest rulers of mediæval India. He cherished a lofty ideal of kingship and used to say that 'it behoves the great to be always active.' He lived for the state and worked hard for the welfare of his subjects. He looked into every detail of government and supervised the activities of the various departments with incessant care. He rose every day early in the morning before sunrise, took his bath and said his prayer. For four hours he transacted the business of the state and then watched the branding of horses and the preparation of descriptive rolls. After breakfast he rested for a while and then again turned to business. The evenings were set apart for reading the Quran and for attending the public prayer. No branch of the administration was neglected and the ministers were asked to report to him everything. He hated corruption and injustice and severely punished those who made unlawful gains. The interests of the peasantry were well protected and any damage to crops was visited with a drastic punishment. To the poor and the destitute he was particularly generous; at all hours the royal kitchens distributed food to those who were in need of it.

As a soldier he was superb. In strategy and tactics he out-generalled the Mughals. His soldiers reposed confidence in him and served him with devotion and loyalty. His methods of war were mild and humane, and the soldiers were never allowed to commit acts of rapine and plunder. At times he was cunning and perfidious, but probably because like other men of his age he believed that nothing was wrong in war.

Although a strict Sunni, he was well disposed towards other sects and religions. The *jeziyā* was not abolished, but the Hindus were treated with justice and toleration. To encourage education among his Hindu subjects, he granted them *waqfs* and allowed them a free hand in their management. For this liberal and beneficent policy he was liked by his subjects of all castes and creeds.

Sher Shah deserves a high place in history. By his political reforms and the policy of religious toleration, he unconsciously laid the foundations of Akbar's greatness. His organisation of the land revenue system was a precious legacy to the Mughals. They followed his plan and perfected it. Todarmal and others adopted his methods of administration, and modified them according to the needs of the situation. Indeed, Sher Shah's achievements place him in the forefront of mediæval history, and his policy of religious toleration will ever remain a shining example of his far-sighted statesmanship.

Humayun's flight.

Having crossed the Ganges, Humayun proceeded towards Agra, and taking his family and treasure went to Delhi, but when he found it impossible to recapture the city, he left for Sarhind. His brothers gave him no help, and Kamran proved a source of great trouble and anxiety. Humayun marched towards Sindh and laid siege to Bhakkar, but here too his ill-luck followed him. It was during this period that he married Hamīdā, daughter of Shaikh

'Ali Akbar Jāmī, who afterwards became the mother of Akbar. Disappointed at the conduct of his brother, he sought the help of Maldeva of Jodhpur who had written to him promising to lend him a contingent of 20,000 Rajputs. But Maldeva did not keep his word. When Humayun reached the Raja's territory, he offered him no welcome, and the spies who were sent to fathom his mind brought the news that he meant treachery. Humayun's old librarian who had taken service with Maldeva sent a message to him in these words: 'March at once from wherever you are, for Maldeva intends to make you prisoner. Put no trust in his words.' This change in Maldeva's attitude was due to his fear of Sher Shah and the utter hopelessness of Humayun's cause. Amarkot was the next place of refuge where the royal party was treated well by Rana Prasad who promised to assist the emperor in conquering Bhakkar and Thatta. It was here in a desert castle that the greatest of the Mughal emperors was born on November 23, 1542 A.D.

Soon after this happy event Humayun left Amarkot, and marched towards Bhakkar with ten thousand men. But Rana Prasad's men deserted him one night owing to a quarrel between the Rana and the Muslim officers in the imperial train. The chief of Bhakkar was tired of war, and a treaty was made by which he agreed to furnish him with 30 boats, 10,000 *mishkals*, 2,000 loads of grain and 300 camels to enable him to proceed to Qandhar. Kamran had become master of the entire Afghan region, and was acting, to all intents and purposes, as an independent ruler. His brother Askari and Hindāl had become his vassals and greatly feared him. Humayun found no shelter with these faithless men, and, leaving his one-year-old child Akbar at Qandhar, he decided to leave for Persia where he hoped to obtain succour from the Shah.

Humayun was hospitably received by Shah Tahmasp who

was a young man of 27 years of age. He issued instructions to all the local governors and officers in his kingdom to accord a warm welcome to Humayun. But the effect of his hospitality was marred by his desire to convert the emperor to the Shia faith. With becoming dignity, Humayun affirmed his belief in the Sunni doctrine, but the Shah continued to embarrass him with his importunities. Evasive replies proved of no avail, and since escape was impossible, the emperor's well-wishers advised him to enter into an agreement with the Shah, embodying a declaration of his acceptance of the Shia creed. A formal treaty was concluded through the intercession of the Shah's sister between the two sovereigns by which the Shah agreed to help Humayun with a contingent in conquering Bokhara, Kabul, and Qandhar on condition that the last place should be ceded to him in the event of success. Humayun was to declare himself a Shia and to have the Shah's name proclaimed in the *khutba*, a condition to which he agreed with considerable reluctance. Encouraged by the Shah's promise of help and its partial fulfilment in the supply of a force of 14,000 men, Humayun proceeded to invade the dominion of Kamran.

Humayun in Persia.

Humayun reached Qandhar in March 1545, and laid siege to the town. The capture of Qandhar considerably improved his position, and having gathered all his forces he advanced upon Kabul. Kamran was defeated and the city fell into his hands. Prince Akbar whom Kamran had once exposed on the ramparts of the fort of Kabul was now restored to his father after a long separation. Though Kamran was defeated, he still entertained hopes of recovering his lost kingdom. He was defeated again, and in a night encounter Mirza Hindāl was killed. The vanquished prince fled to the court of Salim Shah Sūr, but the latter treated him so roughly that he was

Conquest of Kabul and Qandhar.

obliged to seek refuge in the Gakkar country in disgust. The Gakkar chief made him over to Humayun who, in obedience to his father's command, refused to put an end to his life. A consultation was held with the Amirs, and it was finally decided that his life should be spared but he should be rendered incapable of further mischief by being deprived of his eyesight. Kamran expressed a wish to go to Mecca which was granted. His wife accompanied him and served him with fidelity and devotion until his death in 1557. Mirza Askari who had frequently changed sides was also captured and allowed to proceed to Mecca. Having got rid of all his rivals in the north-west, Humayun began to make preparations for the reconquest of Hindustan.

Humayun's Restoration.

Sher Shah's death was an irreparable blow to the Afghans. He had nominated no successor and his young son Jalal Khan who happened to reach the camp in time was proclaimed king under the title of Salim Shah. It was beyond the new monarch's power to control the turbulence of the Afghans, and therefore he was obliged to have recourse to drastic measures to strengthen his position. Several Amirs were imprisoned and put to death. The first victim of his wrath was Shujaat Khan, governor of Malwa, whose chief offence was that he had hoarded enormous wealth and effectively reduced the country to order. Shujaat's informants communicated to him the intentions of the court, and he managed to escape the wrath of Salim by submissive and respectful representations. But Azim Humayun, the governor of the Punjab, acted with little prudence and caution. When he was summoned by the king, he sent a substitute for himself which Salim regarded as an act of gross insubordination. Fearing drastic action on the part of the king, Azim broke out into open rebellion, but he was defeated by the royalists in the battle of Ambala. He fled for his life, and the Punjab was occupied by the Sultan. Again he gathered strength and

fought an action with the royal forces but he was defeated. He fled to Kashmir where he was shot dead by certain tribesmen.

Salim continued his policy of repression. He devised new laws and maintained an efficient army to curb the power of the nobles. He deprived them of their warlike elephants, kept the revenues of the state in his own hands and abolished the practice of supplying money in exchange for a certain fixed quota of mounted men. He established a system of espionage which enabled him to know all that happened in his kingdom. Justice was administered according to a new code of regulations which were interpreted by a Munsif and not by a Qazi or Mufti. To enforce these laws he stationed troops in the various parts of his dominions and exerted himself to the utmost to see that the machinery of government worked with efficiency and vigour.

Salim died in November, 1554. He was succeeded by his son Firuz Khan but the latter was soon murdered by his maternal uncle Mubariz Khan who ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Shah Ādil. Muhammad Shah Ādil was a worthless debauchee, but he had a capable minister in Hemu, a Hindu, who managed his affairs with great ability and vigour. But even he found it difficult to keep in check the forces of disorder which were slowly undermining the empire. Rebellions broke out on all sides, and Muhammad's cousin Ibrahim Khan Sūr seized Delhi and Agra, but he was soon defeated by another brother Sikandar Sūr who acquired possession of the whole country between the Indus and the Ganges.

Humayun was all along watching the chaotic condition of the Afghan empire. In November, 1554, he marched towards Hindustan and the vanguard of the imperial army entered Lahore in February, 1555. Sikandar advanced to give battle at the head of a large army but he was defeated near Sarhind.

He fled from the field of battle and Humayun was restored without further opposition.

Death of Humayun.

The emperor did not live long to enjoy the honours of royalty which he had won by the sheer force of his arms. One day as he was descending from the terrace-roof of his library, he knelt down on the stairs on hearing the call for prayer, but his staff slipped on the polished marble, and he fell headlong on the ground. All medical aid proved unavailing, and he died on January 24, 1556. His death was concealed for some time, and it was after 17 days that the *Khutba* was read in the name of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar.

Character of Humayun.

Humayun was by nature a kind, gentle and affectionate monarch. He was well disposed towards his kinsmen and treated them with generosity and leniency even when they conspired to bring about his ruin. When the nobles made an impassioned appeal to him to slay his arch-enemy Kamran he replied : 'Though my head inclines to your words, my heart does not,' and refused to stain his hands with the murder of a brother. He was not lacking in physical courage, and had given a good account of himself during his father's campaigns. But his general indolence and quixotic generosity frequently spoiled the fruits of victory and deprived him at times of his most valued acquisitions. He had not inherited from his father that invincible courage and strength of will which had led him to attempt thrice the conquest of Samarqand nor was he so skilled in adjusting his means to his ends. He never made the fullest use of his victories and often began a new plan before executing the one he had already in hand. Besides, he was addicted to opium which did not a little to impair his mental and bodily strength. But Humayun was not wholly devoid of noble qualities. He possessed ability and intelligence of no mean order. He loved literature and extended his patronage

to men of letters. Like his father he was fond of poetry and took delight in composing verses. He was interested in mathematics and astronomy, and his plan of constructing an observatory at Delhi was interrupted by his sudden death. But what endears Humayun to us is his buoyancy of temper, his cheerfulness of spirit under desperate situations. Through all his vicissitudes he preserved his native goodness and remained a *bon comrade* to his officers and men. His brothers played the traitor again and again, but he never disregarded his father's dying injunction, and treated them with a kindness which has few parallels in Mughal history. For fifteen years he was persecuted by the malice of destiny, but he never lost the equanimity of his temper and endured his misfortune with great patience and fortitude. Throughout his life Humayun behaved as an indulgent master, a warm-hearted friend and an amiable gentleman, always willing and prompt to show gratitude to those who rendered him service.

CHAPTER XIV

ERA OF RECONSTRUCTION

Accession of Akbar.

At the time of Humayun's death Akbar was absent in the Punjab whither he had gone with Bairam Khan to put an end to the misgovernment of Abdulmali, the local governor. As he was returning from there, he received at Kalanur an express news informing him of the sad event. There was much commotion in the camp but the chiefs and nobles after the customary rites of mourning proceeded to the coronation ceremony which took place in a modest garden on February 14, 1556. As the Prince was a mere boy of thirteen, his father's old and faithful friend Bairam Khan undertook to act as regent for him, and formally assumed charge of the affairs of the empire.

Political Condition of India.

India was neither homogeneous nor well-governed in 1556. The provinces of Hindustan were in a state of disorder and the country round Delhi and Agra was in the throes of a terrible famine. The late emperor had all his life wandered from place to place and had found no time to organise and consolidate his empire. After his death the whole country was reduced to a congeries of states. Towards the north-west, Kabul with its dependencies was under Mirza Muhammad Hakim, Akbar's brother, who acted as an independent ruler, and the empire of Hindustan did not lie beyond the scope of his ambition. Kashmir had also become an independent state under a local Muhammadan dynasty, and the Himalayan states in the neighbourhood enjoyed a similar position. Sindh and Multan had separated from the empire of Delhi after the death of Sher Shah and

formed themselves into independent kingdoms. Bengal was ruled by kings of the Sūr dynasty ; Muhammad Ādil ever since his expulsion from Delhi by his powerful relative Ibrahim Khan had retired to the east, but his indomitable minister Hemu was already in the field at the head of a large army to prevent Akbar from taking quiet possession of his father's dominions. Another Sūr claimant was Sikandar who since his defeat by Bairam Khan in the battle of Sarhind in 1555 was wandering in the Punjab, cherishing the hope that by a stroke of fortuitous good luck he might be able to recover the throne of Sher Shah. To the west of Delhi the Rajput princes exercised independent sway in their mountain fastnesses. The most important states at this time were Mewar, Jesalmir, Bundi and Jodhpur, rendered illustrious in the annals of Rajasthan by the heroic exploits of their warriors. Indeed, Humayun's reign had given the Rajput princes an opportunity of increasing the area of their influence, and since they had no reason to fear the Mughal government at Delhi, they had developed their military resources to such an extent that they felt afterwards strong enough to try conclusions even with the empire. In the central region Humayun's efforts had failed owing to his own woeful lack of decision and promptitude. Malwa and Gujarat had become independent states with considerable territories included in their jurisdiction. Their rulers acted as independent kings, made wars and treaties on their own account, and established diplomatic relations with foreign powers. Gondwānā was subject to a kind of tribal rulership but its affairs were efficiently managed by Rani Durgavati for her minor son. Across the Vindhyas, Khandesh, Berar, Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda were ruled by their own Sultans who had absolutely no concern with the rulers of Delhi. Ever since the break-up of the Bahmani kingdom towards the close of the 15th century these states had been preoccupied with their own affairs and had taken no interest in the politics of Hindustan. Further

south, the whole country from the Krisṇā and Tungabhadrā rivers to Cape Comorin was under the sway of the kings of Vijayanagar whose hostilities towards the Muhammadan sultanates are a matter of common knowledge in Indian history. The Portuguese had established themselves on the western sea-coast and possessed a few ports like Goa and Diu. They were powerful in the Arabian sea and the Persian gulf, and could give trouble to Muslims starting on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

But for the present Akbar's task was exceedingly difficult and to all appearance beyond the powers of a boy of thirteen. He was fortunate in having in his *atālīq* a consummate general and administrator, who not only secured his throne from formidable rivals, but also held the elements of disorder in check at a critical juncture in the empire's history until the reins of office were snatched from him by his impatient and ambitious ward.

Akbar and the Sūr Afghans.

Akbar had first to deal with the Sūr Afghans. Muhammad Ādil had not yet given up the hope of regaining the empire over which Sher Shah had once ruled. He had still in his service Hemu, a consummate general and statesman, who displayed organising capacity and valour of a high order. Originally a petty shop-keeper of Rewari in Mewat, Hemu was a man of humble origin. By sheer dint of merit he had risen from obscurity to high position and had become under Adali the chief minister. Gradually his influence grew at the Afghan court: he granted and resumed jagirs at will and assumed the title of Raja Vikramāditya. Even Abul Fazl admits that he managed the affairs of state with rare ability and success. He was one of the greatest men of his day and among Akbar's opponents throughout Hindustan there was none who could excel him in valour, enterprise, and courage. He had earned for himself unique military distinction by winning 22 pitched battles, and

had defeated his master's rival Ibrahim Sūr. Humayun's sudden death, aided by the circumstance that his son was a mere lad of 13, revived Hemu's hopes of securing the empire of Hindustan. He was sent by Adali, who was in the east at this time with a force consisting of 50,000 horse and 500 elephants towards Agra, which he occupied without encountering any serious resistance from the Mughal generals. Then he marched upon Delhi following close upon the heels of the retreating army, and then he was opposed by the veteran Tardī Beg who happened to be in charge of the capital at the time. Tardi Beg suffered severe defeat at the hands of Hemu who easily acquired possession of the capital. Tardi Beg fled to the imperial camp where he was put to death by the orders of Bairam Khan, and his action was approved by the youthful emperor. As Abul Fazl very pertinently observes, a disapproval of Bairam's action would have caused disorder in the country and mutiny in the army. Whatever may be said about the effect produced by the murder of a general, who had been driven from the field of battle by a powerful enemy, the deed is a stain on the memory of Bairam Khan. Akbar is not to blame, for he was still in *statu pupillari*, and it would have been an act of unexampled folly to override the wishes of the regent, whose co-operation was needed to save the kingdom from ruin at such a crisis. There is great force in Dr. Vincent Smith's contention that those who condemn the execution as a mere murder do not sufficiently appreciate the usage of the times, nor do they fully understand the difficulties and dangers which confronted the regent and his youthful ward.[1] But the manner in which Bairam brought about the murder admits of no palliation even on the ground that the interests of the state demanded the crime.

[1] Akbar, the Great Mughal, p. 36.

Master of Delhi and Agra, Hemu set his forces in order, and made a bold bid for the empire of Hindustan. There was at this time a serious famine in Agra, Biyana, and Delhi, and Badāoni writes that one *sir* of *jwar* sold for 2½ *tankās*, and men of wealth and position closed their houses and died by tens or twenties or even more in one place, 'getting neither grave nor shroud.'[2] The Hindus also suffered miserably, and he saw with his own eyes man eating his fellow-man in sheer desperation. But Hemu whose heart was aflame with ambition cared nothing for the misery and suffering around him and pushed on his preparations. At the head of a large army which included 1,500 war elephants, he proceeded to the field of Panipat. His superior numbers filled the Mughals with dismay, and in the first charge he routed the right and left wings of the imperial army. But before he could press on the centre with his elephants, he was struck in the eye with an arrow which made him sink in the *howdah* in a state of unconsciousness. Hemu's disappearance caused a panic in the army, and it fled in pell-mell confusion. The gallant leader whose 'virile spirit' is praised even by such a hostile writer as Abul Fazl was captured and brought before Akbar.[3] Bairam asked the young emperor to smite the head of the infidel and earn the title of Ghazi, but the generous lad refused to do so, and observed that it was unchivalrous to slay a defenceless enemy. Thereupon Bairam Khan himself thrust his sword into Hemu's body and killed him. His head was sent to Kabul, and his body was gibbeted at Delhi by way of giving a warning to other like-minded persons.[4]

Akbar entered Delhi in triumph and received a warm

[2] Al-Badāonī, I, pp. 549—51.

[3] AKbarnama, II, p. 69.

[4] Akbar, the Great Mughal, p. 36.

welcome from the inhabitants of all classes. Agra was soon occupied, and officers of the imperial army were deputed to seize the goods and treasures of Hemu in Mewat.

Hemu's death dashed to the ground the hopes of the Sūr dynasty. Bairam and his royal ward after a month's stay in the capital marched towards Lahore in pursuit of Sikandar Sūr who was still at large. He shut himself up in the fort of Mankot[5] which he surrendered after a long siege in May 1557. He was treated with generosity, and Bairam Khan respected his rank by assigning to him certain districts in the east where he died twelve years later.

The defeat of Sikandar was followed by the conquest of Gwalior and Jaunpur, and the regent took vigorous measures to consolidate the empire. But he soon came into conflict with his growing ward who had already begun to chafe against his tutelage. The fall of Bairam Khan is one of the most interesting episodes in the early history of Akbar's reign.

Fall of Bairam Khan.

Bairam Khan was left master of the situation after Humayun's death, and was allowed to assume the office of the *vakil-i-saltnat* (chief minister) without any opposition. He was an able and experienced man of affairs, who rose to the highest position in the state by sheer dint of merit. He had retained his loyalty through trying times, and served his late master Humayun with a fidelity and devotion which elicited the admiration of such a man as Sher Shah. Even Badāonī who is an orthodox Sunni praises the Shia minister's upright character, love of learning and devoutness, and expresses regret at his fall. But excess of power leads to abuse, and Bairam adopted a harsh and barbarous policy towards his supposed and suspected enemies.

5 It is a fort in the lower hills now included in Jammu territory in the Kashmir State.

He became oversensitive in matters regarding himself, and in trivial accidental mishaps saw the signs of a sinister conspiracy to compass his ruin. Such a frame of mind is not likely to inspire confidence or smooth the difficulties which beset on every side a great public servant, whose career is bound to be a series of studied compromises and cautious measures. Abul Fazl relates the causes which brought about estrangement between Bairam Khan on the one hand and the emperor and the court party on the other. Bairam had appointed Shaikh Gadai who was a Shia to the office of *Sadr-i-Sadūr*, and this was construed by the Sunnis as a concession to the creed professed by the regent. In addition to this high office he allowed the Shaikh to endorse decrees with his seal, and exempted him from the ceremony of homage, and granted him precedence over the Saiyyads and the Ulama. He had conferred the titles of Sultan and Khan upon his menial servants, and showed an utter lack of propriety in disregarding the claims of the servants of the royal household. He granted the *Panjhazari* (5000) *mansab* to no less than 25 of his own favourites and ignored the just claims of others. He punished the emperor's servants severely when they were found guilty of the most trivial misconduct or dereliction of duty, while his own servants were allowed to escape scotfree even when they committed grave offences. In a fit of rage he had ordered the emperor's own elephant-driver to be put to death without any fault. The execution of Tardi Beg had also caused alarm among the nobles, who considered their position at court highly precarious as long as Bairam was in power. A more serious reason for the growing estrangement between Akbar and Bairam was the suspicion that the latter was harbouring the intention of placing on the throne Abul Qasim, son of Kamran. Lastly, Akbar had grown tired of his tutelage and wished to be a king in fact as well as in name. Like others he disliked Bairam's arrogance and unbridled exercise of authority, and

desired to put an end to it, as is shown by the *farman* which he issued when the Khan-i-Khanan's rebellious intentions became manifest afterwards.

A conspiracy was formed in which the principal partners were Hamida Benū Begum, the dowager queen, Māham Ankah, the foster-mother of Akbar, her son Adam Khan and her relative Shibabuddin, governor of Delhi. The plan was discussed with the emperor at Biyana whither he had gone on the pretext of hunting.

It has been suggested that the emperor was too deeply immersed in hunting expeditions to give thought to such matters. These arguments are scarcely tenable in view of the fact that he had begun to take a keen interest in political affairs, and was fully alive to the importance of asserting his own authority. Hunting afforded a good pretext as it well might under such circumstances. The plot was carried out without the slightest slip from start to finish, and the perfect accordance of its execution with the original plan shows that the emperor was fully aware of it, and followed the details with his usual intelligence and alertness.

It was arranged that Akbar should go to Delhi on the pretext of seeing his mother who was reported to be ill. When he was there, Māham Ankah employed all the arts of a clever and intriguing woman to foment ill-feeling against the Khan-i-Khanan, and magnified his indiscreet utterances into insults towards the royal authority. Bairam who soon discovered what was passing behind the scenes offered 'supplication and humility,' but Akbar had resolved to end his unpopular régime. His friends advised him to seize the person of Akbar and crush the conspirators by a *coup de main*, but he refused to tarnish his record of faithful service by a seditious act. Akbar sent him a message that he had determined to take the reins of government in his own hands, and that he desired him to proceed on pilgrimage to Mecca. He offered him a jagir for

his maintenance the revenue of which was to be sent to him by his agents.

Bairam received Akbar's message with composure and prepared to submit to his fate. When he moved towards Biyana in April 1560, the court party, perturbed by the anxiety lest the Khan-i-Khanan should rebel, induced Akbar to send a certain Pir Muhammad, a former subordinate of Bairam's with a force 'to hasten the latter's departure for Mecca' or as Badāonī puts it 'to pack him off as quickly as possible to Mecca without giving him any time for delay.'[6] Bairam was annoyed at the insult and decided to break out into open rebellion. He proceeded towards the Punjab, and having left his family and goods in the fort of Tabarhindah, resumed his journey. Akbar sent his generals to deal with the insurgent minister, and in an action fought near Jalandhar he was defeated and driven to seek refuge in the Siwalik hills. The emperor himself started for the Punjab, and marched in pursuit of the Khan-i-Khanan. Driven to bay, Bairam offered submission and implored forgiveness. Akbar who fully appreciated his services to his dynasty readily agreed to pardon him, and received him 'with the most princely grace, and presented him with a splendid robe of honour.[7] He was allowed to depart for Mecca with suitable dignity, and the emperor returned to Delhi.

Bairam marched through Rajputana *en route* to Mecca, and reached Patan in Gujarat, where he stayed for a short time. The governor received him well, but made no arrangements for his safety. Probably he apprehended no danger as the minister had expressed contrition for his rebellious conduct. To the surprise of all, he was murdered by an Afghan, whose father had been killed in an action with the Mughals under the

[6] Al-Badāonī, II, p. 33.
[7] Elliot, V, p. 268.

command of Bairam Khan. Bairam's camp was plundered, but his son Abdur Rahim who was then a child of four years of age was rescued from the ruffians, and sent to court, where by his great talents and devotion to the throne he rose to a position of great eminence and earned the title of Khan-i-Khanan in recognition of his valuable services to the empire.

The so-called petticoat government, 1560—64.

Bairam's fall cleared the way for the party of Māham Ankah, a foster-mother of Akbar, whose real capacity for political intrigue soon gained for her an important position in the state. Several historians write that she became the emperor's prime confidante in all matters and held the reins of government in her hands. Dr. Vincent Smith concludes his observations on the fall of Bairam by saying that Akbar shook off the tutelage of the Khan-i-Khanan only to bring himself under the 'monstrous régime of unscrupulous women,' and expresses the view that Māham proved unworthy of the trust reposed in her. He repeats the usual charge that she bestowed offices on her worthless favourites, and cared for nothing except her own interests.

Now, this is not quite correct. If she had really dominated Akbar, as is frequently supposed, she would have advanced the claims of her own son Adham Khan, who had distinguished himself as a soldier against the Bhadauria Rajputs at Mankot. Then, Akbar's treatment of Bairam after his rebellion militates against the view of Dr. Smith. Māham's party had planned the ruin of the Khan-i-Khanan, and no one would have been more gratified than Māham to see the old minister disgraced and condemned to death. But Akbar acted according to his own judgment, and granted pardon to his old tutor irrespective of the wishes of Māham and her associates. It has been seriously argued that her object was merely to further the interests of her own son and relatives. But facts do not warrant this view. No title or Jagir was

conferred upon Adham Khan during this period. It is true, he was entrusted with the command of the expedition against Malwa, but after the conquest he was not appointed sole governor of the province. Again, when reports reached the emperor of his misappropriation of booty, he marched in person from Agra on May 13, 1561, to punish him, but the culprit obtained a pardon through the intercession of his mother. Later, when Adham murdered Shamsuddin Atka Khan (May 16, 1562) on whom the emperor proposed to confer the office of *vakil* in spite of Māham's opposition Akbar ordered him to be thrown down twice the ramparts of his fort in a terrible rage so that his brains were dashed out and he was killed. The emperor himself broke the news to Māham who is reported to have uttered the words: 'Your Majesty did well.' Life ceased to have any interest for Māham who followed her son to the grave within 40 days of his death. If Akbar had been under Māham's influence, Adham would not have suffered such a cruel fate.

A few events of this period deserve to be noticed. An expedition against Malwa was sent (1560 A.D.) under Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad Sherwani who defeated Baz Bahadur, the ruler of the country, and seized much booty. The conquest was accompanied by acts of ruthless cruelty and the misappropriation of booty by Adham Khan. Akbar marched in person to punish him, but as has been said before, it was through his mother's intercession that he secured his pardon.

After some time Adham Khan was recalled from Malwa which was entrusted to Pir Muhammad. But the latter so hopelessly mismanaged things that war broke out again, and Baz Bahadur once more recovered his lost kingdom. He found it difficult to maintain his position, and was expelled from the country. He was finally sent to the court where the emperor conferred upon him a *mansab* of 1,000, which was afterwards raised to 2,000. Adham Khan was at this time thrown down

the ramparts of the fort for the murder of Shamsuddin Muhammad Atka Khan, who had been appointed to the office of minister (*vakil*) in November 1561 A.D.

Akbar's Ambition.

Akbar was a man of strong imperial instinct, and wished to make himself the supreme ruler of Hindustan. With this object in view he set himself to the task of destroying the independence of every state in India, and this policy was continued until 1601, when the capture of Asirgarh crowned his career of unparalleled military glory and conquest.

Conquest of Gondwānā.

He began by ordering an unprovoked attack upon the small kingdom of Gondwānā in the Central Provinces which was then ruled by a remarkable queen, the gallant Rani Durgawati, so well known in history, who acted as regent for her minor son. Asaf Khan, the governor of Kara, marched against her. The Rani bravely defended herself, but in a battle between Garh and Mandal in the modern Jabalpur district she was defeated by the imperialists who far exceeded her in numbers. Like queen Boadicea of the Celts, Durgawati preferred death to dishonour, and perished on the field of battle, fighting to the last. The country was laid waste, and immense booty was captured by the invaders. Bir Narayan, the young Raja, turned out a true son of his mother. Realising the impossibility of success against his enemies, he performed the rite of *Jauhar*, and then died fighting bravely in defence of the honour of his house.

Rebellions.

The conquest of Gondwānā synchronised with three important rebellions in Hindustan which were all effectively suppressed. Abdulla Khan Uzbeg who had superseded Pir Muhammad rebelled in Malwa, but he was defeated and driven into Gujarat. Early in 1565 broke out the rebellion of Khan Zaman, another Uzbeg leader of Jaunpur, Akbar himself marched to the east, and drove the

rebels towards Patna. Khan Zaman made peace which he violated soon afterwards.

More serious than these was the invasion of the Punjab by Akbar's brother Mirza Hakīm who was encouraged in his designs by the Uzbegs. The half-subdued rebel Khan Zaman acknowledged his claim to the throne of Hindustan and caused the *Khutba* to be read in Hakim's name. Mightily offended by his brother's hostile move, Akbar marched towards the Punjab. The news of his approach frightened Hakīm, and he beat a hasty retreat across the Indus. Akbar returned to Agra in May, 1567, and resolved to deal with Khan Zaman. He rode across the Ganges on the back of his elephant at the head of a considerable force and inflicted a severe defeat upon the rebellious Uzbeg. He was killed, and his brother Bahadur was captured and beheaded. Their accomplices were severely punished, and several of them were trampled under the feet of elephants. The emperor obtained a large number of the heads of the enemy by offering a gold *mohar* for the head of a Mughal rebel and a rupee for that of a Hindustani.

Akbar and the Rajputs.

Akbar was by nature a tolerant and broad-minded ruler. Born under the sheltering care of a Hindu, when his father was wandering as an exile, disowned by those who had enjoyed his favour, he sympathised with the Hindus and sought their friendship. The Rajputs were the military leaders of the Hindu community. They were the best fighting men of India and must needs be subdued or conciliated, if his empire was to rest upon solid foundations. His association with cultivated men enlarged his natural sympathies and convinced him of the futility of sectarian differences. Men like Todarmal and Birbal who joined his service impressed him with the genius and ability of the Hindus, and the Emperor became more and more inclined to extend his favour to them and to make them

sharers in developing the grandiose plan of an empire, knowing no distinction of caste and creed, which he was maturing in his mind. There could be no Indian empire without the Rajputs, no social or political synthesis without their intelligent and active co-operation. The new body politic must consist of the Hindus and Muslims and must contribute to the welfare of both. The emperor's lofty mind rose above the petty prejudices of his age, and after much anxious thought he decided to associate the Rajputs with himself on honourable terms in his ambitious enterprises. The first Rajput to join the imperial court was Bhārmal, the Kachwāhā Raja of Amber. In January, 1562, when the emperor was going to Ajmer to visit the holy shrine of Khwaja Muinuddin, he was informed that Bhārmal was hard pressed by Sharafuddin Husain, the Governor of Mewat, at the instigation of Sujā, son of his brother Pūranmal. At Sāngānīr, Bhārmal with his family waited upon His Majesty and was received with honour. He expressed a wish to enter the imperial service and strengthened his relationship by means of a matrimonial alliance. His wish was granted, and on his return from Ajmer Akbar received at Sāmbhar the Raja's daughter whom he married. Bhārmal with his son Bhagwān Das and grandson Man Singh accompanied the emperor to Agra where he was given a command of 5,000, and his son and grandson were granted commissions in the imperial army. This marriage is an important event in our country's history. It healed strife and bitterness, and produced an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill where there had been racial and religious antagonisms of a most distressing character. Dr. Beni Prasad rightly observes that 'it symbolised the dawn of a new era in Indian politics; it gave the country a line of remarkable sovereigns; it secured to four generations of Mughal emperors the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that mediæval India produced.

The Rana of Mewar was the greatest prince in Rajputana. He traced his descent from Rāma, the hero of the great epic, Rāmāyaṇa, and was the acknowledged head of Rajput chivalry. Akbar, who had received the homage of the Raja of Amber, clearly saw that his aim of being the paramount lord of Northern India could not be realised unless he captured the famous fortresses of Chittor and Ranthambhor. The conquest of Mewar was therefore part of a larger enterprise, and the emperor intended to treat it as a stepping stone to his further conquest of the whole of Hindustan. Besides, the Rana had given offence to the emperor by giving shelter to Baz Bahadur, the fugitive king of Malwa, and by assisting the rebellious Mirzas. In August, 1567, when the emperor was encamped at Dholpur on his way to Malwa, Shakti Singh, a son of the Rana of Mewar, who had fled from his father in anger, waited upon him. One day Akbar told the young prince in jest that all the important chieftains of India had offered submission, but Rana Udaya Singh had not yet done so, and therefore he proposed to march against him. The prince quietly escaped from the royal camp at night and informed his father of the emperor's intentions. Akbar, when he came to know of Shakti Singh's departure, was filled with wrath and resolved to humble the pride of Mewar.

Conquest of Chittor.

In September, 1567, the emperor started for Chittor, and on October 20, 1567, reached near the fort and encamped his army in the vast plain that still surrounds it. The Rana had already left Chittor, and retired to the hills with the advice of his chiefs, entrusting the fort to the care of Jaymal and Pattā with 8,000 brave Rajputs under their command.[8] The names

[8] Colonel Tod speaks of two invasions of Mewar, but this is probably an invention of the bards.

Udaya Singh did not run away from Chittor as is sometimes supposed. He called a council of his Chiefs when he heard of Akbar's intention

of these two warriors are, as Colonel Tod enthusiastically records, household words in Mewar, and will be honoured while the Rajput retains a shred of his inheritance or a spark of his ancient recollections.

The imperialists laid siege to the fortress, and Akbar ordered *Sabats* to be constructed. The Rajputs fought with great gallantry, and the emperor himself narrowly escaped death several times. So gloomy was the prospect that the emperor vowed to undertake a pilgrimage on foot to the Khwaja's shrine at Ajmer, if God granted him victory in the war. Fighting went on ceaselessly until February 23, 1568, when Jayamal was shot in one of his legs by a bullet from the Emperor's gun. His fall was a great blow to the Rajputs but they did not lose heart. Suffering from a mortal wound, Jayamal called together his men and asked them to perform the last rite of *Jauhar* and to prepare for the final charge. The ghastly tragedy was perpetrated, and many a beautiful princess and noble matron of Mewar perished in the flames.

Next morning the gates were opened, and the Rajputs rushed upon the enemy like mad wolves. Jaymal and Pattā bravely defended the honour of Mewar, but they were at last slain in the action. The entire garrison died fighting to a man, and when Akbar entered the city, he ordered a general massacre. Abul Fazl writes that 30,000 persons were killed, but this seems to be an exaggeration. Having entrusted the fort to his own garrison, the emperor returned to Ajmer and fulfilled the vow which he had made during the siege. He was so struck by the valour of the Rajputs that when he reached

to invade his country. They told him that Mewar had exhausted her strength in fighting against Gujarat and it would be difficult to resist Akbar who was so powerful. They advised him to retire to the hills with his family.

Gauri Shankar Ojha, Rajputana ka Itihas (Hindi), Pt. II, pp. 724-25.

Agra he ordered the statues of Jayamal and Pattā to be placed at the gate of the fort.

Conquest of Ranthambhor and Kalanjar.

A year after the conquest of Chittor, the emperor sent his generals against Ranthambhor, the stronghold of the Hārā section of the Chohan clan, deemed impregnable in Rajasthan. In December, 1568, the emperor set out in person and arrived at the scene of action in February, 1569. The fort was situated on a hill so high that ascent was impossible, and *manjnīqs* were of little use. The imperialists managed to get some guns to the top of another hill, which existed very near. When bombardment began from this hill, the walls began to give way, and the edifices in the fort crumbled down to the earth. The chief of Ranthambhor, Surjana Hara, seeing the superior strength of the imperial army, came to the conclusion that further resistance was impossible. Through the intercession of Rajas Bhagwān Das and Man Singh he sent his sons Dūda and Bhoja to the emperor, who granted them robes of honour and sent them back to their father. Touched by the emperor's magnanimity, Surjana Hārā expressed a desire to wait on him. His wish was granted, and escorted by Husain Quli Khan, the Rai paid his respects to Akbar and surrendered to him the keys of the fortress. He accepted the service of the emperor, and was posted as a *qiladar* at Garhkantak, and was afterwards appointed as governor of the province of Benares and the fort of Chunar.

When Akbar left Agra for Ranthambhor, he had sent Manjnū Khan Qāqshāl at the head of a large army to reduce the fort of Kalanjar in Bundelkhand. The news of the fall of Chittor and Ranthambhor had already reached Raja Rāmchandra and he surrendered the fort to the imperial commandant in August, 1569. Friendly greetings were sent to the Rana who was given a jagir near Allahabad, and the fort was placed in charge of the general whose valour had

captured it. The conquest of Kalanjar gave to Akbar an important fort which considerably strengthened his military position in Northern India. Henceforward he could proceed with his other plans of conquest without fearing any trouble from the Rajputs.

Submission of their chiefs.

Several other Rajput chiefs offered their submission after these conquests. Chandra Sen, son nf Raja Maldeva of Jodhpur, waited upon His Majesty at Nagor, but his friendship does not seem to have lasted long. Chandra Sen defied the authority of the emperor afterwards and retired to the hill fort of Siwana. The emperor ordered an attack on Jodhpur, and gave it to Rai Rai Singh of Bikanir. Rai Singh's father Rai Kalyan Mal also came to pay homage to the emperor at Nagor with his son. The Raja presented tribute, and the loyalty of both father and son being manifest, the emperor married Kalyan Mal's daughter. As Kalyan Mal was too fat to ride on horseback, he was permitted to go back to Bikanir, while his son remained at court, and received a *mansab* from the emperor.

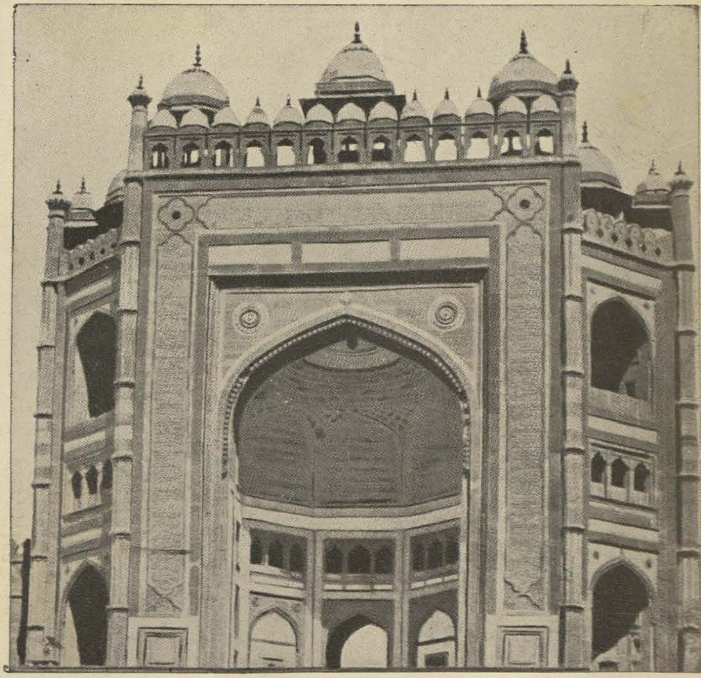
Reflections on Akbar's Rajput Policy.

Akbar's policy towards the Rajputs originated in ambition, but it was more generous and humane than that of other Muslim rulers. His predecessors had humiliated the princes whom they conquered and ravaged their lands. Akbar was endowed with the higher qualities of statesmanship, and he resolved to base his empire on the goodwill of both Hindus and Muslims. He adopted a policy of conciliation, and refused to treat them as inferiors because they were 'infidels' or 'unbelievers.' He waged relentless wars against them, but when they offered submission, he sheathed his sword with pleasure. No desecration or religious persecution marred the glory of his triumphs, and he refrained from doing anything that might wound the feelings of his Rajput enemies. Equality of status with the Muslims steeled the loyalty of the

Rajput chiefs and they shed their life-blood in the service of the empire in distant and dangerous lands. The friendship was further cemented by matrimonial alliances which brought advantages to both sides, and opened new avenues of honour to the Rajput princes. They found scope for themselves as soldiers who might have otherwise lived out their life in glorious obscurity in their mountain or desert fastnesses. The rapid growth of the empire and the success of their mighty hero, a worthy object of devotion and loyalty, stirred their martial spirit, and led them on to new fields of glory and renown, and made them forget whatever humiliation their discomfiture or surrender implied. Many of them loved art and literature, and their presence added to the magnificence of the imperial court which became famous in Asia and Europe, and by their levies increased the strength of the legions of the empire. Most of them enrolled themselves as *mansabdars*, and fought in battles and sieges shoulder to shoulder with Mughal officers. They secured for the emperor the goodwill of Hindus of whom they were the acknowledged political leaders. Through them the millions of Northern India became reconciled to Akbar's government and prayed for its welfare. It was they who aided to a large extent the synthesis of religions and cultures in which the emperor took delight, and by their acceptance of Muslim ideas of political and social organisation they made possible the fusion of the Hindus and Muslims. No impartial historian can fail to give credit to these pioneers of Indo-Muhammadan culture, which is the greatest legacy of the Mughals to this country.

Birth of Prince Salim.

Hitherto all the children born to Akbar had died in infancy, and it was his great desire to have a son on whom he would bestow the care and affection of a loving father. Every year he paid a visit to the Khwaja's holy shrine at Ajmer, and vowed, as was his wont, to make a pilgrimage on foot, if he



Buland Darwaza, Fatehpur Sikri

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were blessed with a son. Many a time he went to Sikri where lived Shaikh Salim Chishti, the venerable sage whose saintliness and austere penances drew to him many admiring disciples from far and near. Early in 1569 it was reported that his first Hindu wife, the daughter of Raja Bhārmal of Jaipur, was with child. She was removed to Sikri for confinement with all her attendants, where, on August 30, 1569, she gave birth to a boy, it was believed everywhere, through the prayers of the holy Shaikh. The child was named Salim after the saint, though Akbar always addressed him by his pet name Shaikhū Bābā. The pious father fulfilled his vow by making a pilgrimage on foot to Ajmer in 1570, and presented his offerings at the shrine.

Foundation of Fatehpur.

The blessing of Shaikh Salim Chishti so filled the heart of Akbar with gratitude that he decided to leave Agra and transfer his court to Sikri. Here in course of time a large city grew up, adorned and beautified by the emperor's lavish bounty. The constructions extended over nearly fourteen years and reached completion in 1574. The Shaikh died in 1572, and over his remains Akbar built a fine mausoleum of pearls, which by reason of its elegance and delicate design still excites the wonder and admiration of art critics. The Great Mosque which is supposed to be a "duplicate of the holy place" at Mecca was finished in 1572, and is one of the finest examples of Mughal architecture. But nothing excels in grandeur and stateliness the Buland Darwaza or Lofty Gateway which was completed in 1575-76, though designed in 1573, to commemorate the imperial conquest of Gujarat.

It was after the conquest of Gujarat that the city came to be called Fatehpur though the emperor had given it the name of Fatehabad. The numerous buildings of this noble city, erected by the bounty of a generous monarch, are still visited by thousands of visitors from all parts of the globe.

The palaces, baths, reservoirs, offices, halls and their huge corridors make the deserted city even in its ruins an abode of romance and wonder, which, while enabling us to form an idea of the greatness and glory of the Mughals, remind us forcibly of the ephemeral nature of worldly possessions and the emptiness of all our earthly vanities.

The emperor lived at Fatehpur from 1569 to 1585 for about 17 years. In 1582 the dam of the lake of Fatehpur was broken, and the whole town was inundated. He decided to leave the beautiful city and transferred the court to Agra in 1585.

Conquest of Gujarat.

Having conquered Malwa and broken the power of the Rajputs, Akbar resolved to lead an expedition to Gujarat. The province had been conquered by Humayun, but he had lost it owing to his own lethargy and inaction. Akbar naturally felt desirous of recovering the lost province of his father's empire. Besides, Gujarat was a land of plenty whose prosperity, fertility and wealth had deeply impressed all European and Asiatic travellers who had visited it. The ports of Gujarat were the emporia of trade with the west, and Broach, Cambay, and Surat had carried on lucrative trade with the countries of Asia and Europe since the earliest times. They are frequently mentioned in the literature of the ancient Hindus as centres of sea-borne trade, and it was for this reason that ever since the days of Mahmud of Ghazni the Muslim rulers of Hindustan had sought the conquest of Gujarat. The ruler of Gujarat at this time was Muzaffar Shah II, a weak and incompetent man, whose authority was not respected even by his own subjects.

Muzaffar was a king merely in name, and all real power was in the hands of certain nobles. The whole country was in a state of complete disorder, and its most important provinces were held by chiefs who were anxious to establish their own independent power. Then, there were the Mirzas who

were related to the emperor and who created strife and offered help by turns to rival chieftains. Muzaffar found it impossible to control the forces of disorder, and when Akbar marched against him, he fled from the capital and took refuge in a corn field. The emperor pitied him and granted him a paltry allowance of Rs. 30 per month. The chiefs of Gujarat offered their submission, and Akbar placed the town of Ahmadabad under Khan-i-Azam Aziz Koka, his favourite foster-brother. While he was engaged in settling the affairs of Gujarat, news came that one of the Mirzas had slain a certain amir, who wished to pay homage to Akbar. The emperor started forthwith to chastise the rebellious Mirza and inflicted a crushing defeat upon him at Sarnal.[9] This victory was followed by the siege of Surat which surrendered after a period of one month and seventeen days. The Mirzas again stirred up strife, but they were defeated by Aziz Koka, who was assisted by the chiefs of Malwa, Chanderi and other important states. Having subjugated the country, the emperor returned to Sikri.

No sooner did the emperor turn his back than trouble broke out afresh in Gujarat, and the imperial garrison suffered heavily at the hands of the local rebels. Akbar was mightily offended at this, and he resolved to finish the Gujarat affair once for all. He set out with a well-organized force for Ahmadabad where he reached after an arduous journey of eleven days. The Mirzas were upset by the news that the emperor had come in person to deal with them. They were severely defeated along with their allies, and the emperor commemorated his victory by constructing a tower of human skulls which numbered about 2,000.

Akbar was now complete master of Gujarat. There was no man of substance left to challenge his authority, and therefore he turned his attention to the work of civil organization.

[9] It is five miles to the east of Kharia.

Arrangements were made forthwith for the settlement of the country, and Raja Todarmal was entrusted with the management of the finances, which had been in a state of disorder for a long time. He made a land survey, and reorganized the entire revenue system so that the country yielded a net annual income of five millions to the imperial exchequer. His work was afterwards continued by another able officer Shihab-ud-din Ahmad Khan, who held the charge of the province from 1577 till 1584 A.D.

With the laurels of victory on his brow, the emperor rode back to Sikri (October 5, 1573), where at the foot of the hill he was accorded a grand reception by his nobles and officers, whose vociferous greetings were drowned in the noise of the kettledrums, which proclaimed from the portals of the newly-built Jam-i-masjid the happy news of the conquest of one of the richest and most fertile provinces of Hindustan. The new city which the emperor had built near Sikri was henceforward called Fatehpur.

Conquest of Bengal.

Bengal had always been a most refractory province of the empire of Delhi. It was held by the Afghan chiefs in the time of Sher Shah, but in 1564 Sulaiman Khan, chief of Bihar, occupied Gaur, and became the ruler of both provinces. After his death he was succeeded by his son Bayazid, but he was murdered by his ministers who placed on the throne his younger son Daud, whom the author of the *Tabqāt* describes as a "dissolute scamp who knew nothing of the art of governing." The possession of an immense treasure accumulated by his father and a large army turned the head of Daud, and he soon incurred the wrath of the emperor by seizing the fort of Zamania on the eastern frontier of the empire.

The emperor sent Munim Khan, an old and experienced general, against Daud at the head of a large army, but influenced by his friendship with the rebel's father he made

peace with him. The emperor highly disapproved of his action, and ordered him to prosecute the campaign with greater vigour. When Munim's efforts failed against Patna, the emperor himself marched to the scene of action. Daud fled, leaving Patna to its fate, and the imperialists entered the city in triumph without encountering any opposition. Munim Khan was made governor of Bengal, and was invested with ample authority to deal with the situation. Daud was forced to make peace, but his restless spirit again got the better of him, and he began slowly to grab the territory which had been snatched away from him. Munim Khan who was already eighty years of age died in October, 1575, and his death gave Daud the opportunity which he so eagerly desired. He gathered his forces again, and taking advantage of the situation reoccupied the whole country.

The emperor was enraged beyond all bounds at the news of Daud's audacity. He sent another general who routed the Afghans in a battle near Raj Mahal, and took Daud prisoner. His head was cut off, and was sent to the emperor, while the rest of his body was gibbeted at Tanda.

With Daud fell the independent kingdom of Bengal which had lasted for nearly 240 years. The whole country of Bengal and Bihar became subject to Akbar, and was henceforward governed by the imperial viceroys.

War with Mewar.

Rana Udaya Singh died in 1572, and was succeeded by his son Pratap, who embodied in his person the spirit of Rajput freedom. He called to his mind the deeds of Rana Sanga and Rana Kumbha, his great ancestors who had held aloft in their day the banner of freedom, and had made the force of their arms felt by their Muslim contemporaries. He was often heard to exclaim in bitterness and sorrow, 'Had Udai Singh never been or none intervened between him and Rana Sanga no Turk should ever have given laws to Rajasthan.' He saw the

influence of the poison which was insidiously working its way into the Rajput society, and while his fellow-princes vied with one another in promoting the glory of the empire, he resolved to redeem the honour of his race. It was not an easy task ; in the event of war he will have against him not only the organised might of Akbar who was at this time 'immeasurably the richest monarch on the face of this earth,'[9a] but nearly all the leading chiefs of Rajputana, who had considerable forces at their command, and who were desirous of seeing Rana Pratap humbled like themselves. The chronicles of Rajasthan relate an anecdote which, whether true or not, illustrates the Rajput mentality of the time.[10] On one occasion, when Raja Man Singh of Amber was returning from some campaign, he sought an interview with Rana Pratap on the bank of the Udayasagar lake. A feast was arranged in honour of the distinguished Kachwāhā, but the Rana did not attend, and excused himself on the ground of indisposition. Raja Man divined the reason of his absence, and said, 'If the Rana refuses to put a plate before me, who will?' The Rana expressed his regret but added that he could not dine with a Rajput who had married his sister to a Turk, and had probably eaten with him. Stung to the quick by this insulting remark, Raja Man left the dinner untouched, and observed as he was preparing to leave the place : 'It was for the preservation of your honour that we sacrificed our own and gave our sisters and daughters to the Turk ; but abide in peril, if such be your resolve, for this country shall not hold you.' As he leapt on the back of his horse, he turned to the Rana who appeared just in time to hear the remark and said : 'If I do not humble your pride, my name is not Man.' To this Pratap replied that he should always be happy to meet him, while some irres-

9a Akbar, the Great Moghul, p. 148.

10 Annals, I, pp. 391-92.

ponsible person from behind whispered an undignified rebuke in asking the Raja not to forget to bring his Phūpha (husband of the father's sister) Akbar with him.

The anecdote goes on to add that the ground on which the board was spread was washed, and Ganges water was sprinkled over it, while the chiefs who were present bathed themselves, and changed their garments to wash away the pollution caused by the presence of one whom they considered an 'apostate.' Such were the sentiments of Rana Pratap and the other men of mighty resolve, who scorned the offers of wealth and power, and clung to their chief with a devotion the memory of which will ever remain a proud possession of their descendants.

The Rana who foresaw the danger at once took steps to organise his government, and devised regulations to make his army more efficient and better equipped. He strengthened fortresses like Kumbhalmir and Gogunda, and decided to adopt the method of guerilla warfare in dealing with the Mughals.

Abul Fazl speaks of the Rana's 'arrogance, presumption, disobedience, deceit and dissimulation,' but it was impossible for a courtier like him to appreciate the greatness of Rana Pratap and the loftiness of the purpose for which he waged a life-long war against the empire. Dr. Vincent Smith puts in a nutshell the *casus belli* when he says :

> "His (Rana Pratap's) patriotism was his offence. Akbar had won over most of the Rajput chieftains by his astute policy and could not endure the independent attitude assumed by the Rana who must be broken if he would not bend like his fellows."

Akbar resolved to destroy the Rana's independence and to annex Mewar to the empire, and in this task he was assisted by the Rajputs themselves. The Rana, who knew beforehand the danger that loomed on the horizon, vowed to preserve the purity of his blood and once more to uphold the traditions of

the Sisodias by sacrificing himself in the service of the land that gave him birth.

Akbar sent Man Singh and Asaf Khan in April, 1576, from Ajmer against the Rana. They arrived *via* Mandalgarh at the pass of Haldighat where a great battle was fought. The historian Badāonī has given a graphic account of this battle, which will be read with great interest. He was himself present on the field of battle, and writes from personal observation. The Rana came out of the mountains with 300 horse, and in the first attack the vanguard of the imperial troops 'became hopelessly mixed up together, and sustained a complete defeat.' The Rajputs on the Mughal left 'ran away like a flock of sheep, and fled for protection towards the right wing.' It was on this occasion that the historian asked Asaf Khan how they were to distinguish between the hostile and friendly Rajputs in such a confused mass whereupon the general replied, 'on whichever side they may be killed, it will be a gain to Islam.'

The Rana retreated into the hills but the Mughals did not pursue him.[11] Next day, the imperialists reached Gogunda which was guarded by the Rana's men who died bravely fighting in their defence.

[11] It is related by Badāonī (Lowe, II, p. 247) that the emperor was displeased with Man Singh because he did not pursue the Rana and because he being a Rajput himself, did not allow the troops to plunder the Rana's country. When the news of the distressed condition of the army reached him, he sent for Man Singh, Asaf Khan and Qazi Khan from the scene of war and excluded them from the court for some time. Nizamuddin expresses a more balanced view when he says that what displeased the emperor was that they would not allow the troops to plunder the Rana's country.

Elliot, V, p. 401.

The cause of the emperor's displeasure is thus described by Abul Fazl:

The Mughals had gained a complete victory, and the bigoted Badāonī was commissioned by Man Singh to convey the gladsome tidings to the emperor at Fatehpur. Rana Pratap's spirit was not damped by this defeat. He soon recovered all Mewar except Chittor, Ajmer and Mandalgarh, and the annals relate that he raided the state of Amber and sacked its chief mart of Malpura. The Rana died in 1597, and the final scene has been pathetically described by Tod. The dying hero is represented in a lowly dwelling ; his chiefs, the faithful companions of many a glorious day, awaiting round his pallet the dissolution of the prince, when a groan of mental anguish made Salumbar inquire, "what afflicted his soul that it would not depart in peace?" He rallied. "It lingered," he said, "for some consolatory pledge that his country should not be abandoned to the Turk" ; and with the death-pang upon him, he related an incident which had guided his estimate of his son's disposition, and tortured him with the reflection that for personal ease he would forego the remembrance of his own and his country's wrongs. At this time Prince Amar whose (Rana's son) turban was dragged off by a projecting bamboo in the hut experienced an emotion which was noticed with pain by the dying Rana who is reported to have said : 'These sheds will give way to sumptuous dwellings, thus generating the love of ease ; and luxury with its concomitants will ensue, to which the independence of Mewar, which we have bled to maintain, will be sacrificed ; and you, my chiefs, will follow the pernicious example.' They gave the needed assurance and solemnly declared by the throne of Bappā Rāwal

" . . . Turksters and time-servers suggested to the royal ear that there had been slackness in extirpating the wretch, and the officers were ready incurring the King's displeasure. But His Majesty understood the truth and attached little value to what the backbiters told him."

that they would not permit mansions to be raised until Mewar had recovered her independence. The soul of Pratap was satisfied, and with joy he expired.

Rana Pratap was succeeded by his son Amar Singh in 1597. He reorganised the institutions of the state, made a fresh assessment of the lands, and regulated the conditions of military service. The Mughals took the offensive again, and in 1599 Akbar sent Prince Salim and Raja Man Singh to invade Mewar. The Prince frittered away his time in the pursuit of pleasure at Ajmer, but the valiant Raja aided by other officers did a great deal. Amar led the attack, but he was defeated, and his country was devastated by the imperialists. The campaign came to an end abruptly, when Raja Man Singh was called away by the emperor in order to quell the revolt of Usman Khan in Bengal. Akbar contemplated another invasion of Mewar, but his illness prevented him from putting his plan into execution.

Political effects of Akbar's religious views.

Akbar's alleged apostasy of which an account will be given later had caused alarm in orthodox circles. During the years 1578-79 debates were held at Fatehpur Sikri in the *Ibadat Khana* with great zeal among the protagonists of rival sects. Akbar had himself assumed the position of the *Imām-i-ādil*, and read the *ḳhutba* from the pulpit. The so-called infallibility decree of 1579, declaring the emperor supreme arbiter in all causes ecclesiastical and civil, raised a storm among the *ūlama*. The emperor's disregard of orthodoxy, which was manifest in the rules and regulations issued by him, further exasperated the learned in the law, and produced a great uneasiness in the minds of the Muslims. The more desperate began to devise ways and means of getting rid of the heretical emperor. It was in such a position that Akbar found himself in 1580-81. The declaration of his religious views caused profound dismay in orthodox quarters, and the history

of the rebellions that followed is closely bound up with the growth of the religious policy which the emperor adopted under the influence of his advisers.

Rebellion in Bengal.

Khan-i-Jahan, who was placed in charge of Bengal after the suppression of Daud, died in May, 1579, and was succeeded by Muzaffar Khan Turbati who is described by Nizamuddin as a man harsh in his measures and offensive in his speech. The imperial *Diwan* at this time was Shah Mansūr, an expert account officer, who ordered a careful enquiry into all titles and tenures with a view to confiscate all unauthorised holdings. The new regulations were enforced in Bengal with great severity. What caused discontent among the Jagirdars was the evident injustice of the method of assessment followed by the administration. Each case was not examined on the merits but an average was fixed which meant that every Jagirdar, whether his title was valid or not, had to restore some extra land to the crown or to pay for it. The result of this was that the assessed value of Jagirs in Bengal rose by one-fourth and of those in Bihar by one-fifth. There was another grievance. Having regard to the bad climate of Bengal, Akbar had increased the allowances of soldiers serving in Bengal and Bihar. Mansūr, who was a strickler for administrative uniformity, reduced these allowances by 50 per cent in Bengal and by 30 per cent in Bihar. Even the *Sayūrghāl* lands were not exempt from this inquest, and the *ūlama* were greatly excited over what they regarded as an improper interference with their sacred rights.

There was yet another cause which aggravated the turmoil in the east. It was the emperor's religious policy, and Abul Fazl clearly states that the establishment of the principle of universal toleration (*Sulh-i-Kul*) was looked upon by the unthinking people as an abandonment of Islam. The Qazi of Jaunpur, Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, had issued a *fatwa* (a

solemn declaration) early in 1580, declaring it lawful for Muslims to take up arms against the emperor whose measures threatened the very existence of Islam in India. With these causes at work, the actual outbreak of rebellion could not be long delayed in the east.

The immediate cause of the revolt was the harsh policy of Muzaffar. He deprived the amirs of their jagirs, and enforced the *dagh* system with needless severity. The first to revolt were the *Qaqshals*, an important Chaghtai tribe, whose leader Baba Khan resented the demand of the *dagh* tax. Muzaffar's insulting language towards Baba Khan roused the ire of the whole clan, and the Turks advanced upon the city of Gaur with arms in their hands, and destroyed the property of the governor. They were joined by others who had their own grievances against the state. The emperor, on hearing the news of the revolt, sent Raja Todarmal with some other officers to restore order in the province, but they failed. Soon after Muzaffar was put to death, and the whole country of Bengal and Bihar fell into the hands of the rebels. Todarmal tried to conciliate the rebels but failed. They gathered so much strength that the imperial general had to shut himself up for four months in the fort of Mungher which was besieged by them. The emperor sent Aziz Koka to Bengal, and the two generals with their combined forces crushed the *Qaqshals*. But soon after this a new danger appeared on the horizon. This was the rebellion of Māsūm Farankhudi, the jagirdar of Jaunpur. He was defeated by Shah Baz Khan, and compelled to seek refuge in the Siwalik hills. Through the good offices of Aziz Koka the emperor pardoned him, but he did not live long to enjoy the imperial favour. He was murdered by a man who had a private grudge against him. Fighting went on in the east, but the force of the rebellious movement was considerably weakened.

More serious than the rebellion in the east was the invasion

of Muhammad Hakīm, Akbar's brother, who ruled at Kabul.

The Kabul expedition and the execution of Khwaja Mansūr.

Mirza Hakīm's mind was inflamed by the 'idle talk of the rebels of the eastern provinces' which made no secret of their designs to place him on the throne of Hindustan in place of his heretical brother. Akbar was informed of Hakīm's design, but he had always overlooked his faults saying, "He is a memorial of H. M. Jahanbani (Humayun Padshah). A son can be acquired but how can a brother be obtained?" The Bengal rebels were not alone in opening negotiations with Hakīm; they were joined by certain officials of Akbar's court, one of whom was the Diwan of the empire, Khwaja Mansūr. The conspirators had pledged their adhesion to a bad cause. Hakīm was a debauchee and a drunkard 'wholly incapable of meeting his brother either in statecraft or in the field.' The court officials were opportunists or turn-coats, having no qualms of conscience in transferring their allegiance to the man who established his title to the throne by success in battle.

What was Hakīm's motive? Nizamuddin clearly states that he set out from Kabul with the object of conquering Hindustan. In the middle of December 1580, Hakīm sent one of his officers to invade the Punjab, but he was driven back. A second inroad followed under Shādmān, but he was defeated and killed by Raja Man Singh. In Shādmān's baggage were discovered three letters from Mirza Hakīm, one of which was addressed to Shah Mansūr, purporting to be a reply to an invitation to invade Hindustan. Man Singh sent these letters to the emperor who did not disclose their contents to any one.

After Shādmān's repulse, the Mirza himself marched into the Punjab at the head of 15,000 cavalry and advanced upon Lahore. All attempts to induce the local chiefs to join him having failed, the Mirza hastily withdrew to his country.

On hearing the news of the Mirza's advance, Akbar reluctantly decided to march against him. He gathered a force consisting of about 50,000 cavalry, 500 elephants and countless infantry. To guard himself against conspiracy the emperor took Khwaja Mansūr with him, and Princes Salim and Murad also accompanied him. When the army reached Panipat, Malik Sani Kabuli, *Diwan* of Mirza Hakīm, came to the imperial camp, and stayed with the Khwaja and through him opened communications with the emperor against his master. The emperor's suspicions against the Khwaja were confirmed. Another batch of letters was discovered which convinced the emperor of the Khwaja's guilt, and he ordered him without further enquiry to be hanged on a tree to the great joy of the officers of the state, who had their own grievances against him.

Akbar continued his march towards Ambala and Sarhind, and crossed the Indus on his way to Kabul. Prince Salim entered the Khaibar Pass and marched upon Jalalabad, while Murad advanced towards Kabul. The Mirza attacked him but he was defeated and put to flight. When the emperor heard that Hakīm intended to take refuge with the Uzbegs, he pardoned his offences, and restored his kingdom to him on condition that he would remain faithful to his sovereign.[12]

[12] Dr. V. Smith relying upon Monserrate says (Akbar, p. 200) that Kabul was not conferred upon Hakīm directly. As he did not wait on the emperor in person, it was offered to his sister the wife of Khwaja Hasan of Badakhshan, when she came to see him. She, however, allowed Hakīm to recover quiet possession of the country. Abul Fazl does not mention this. Nizamuddin supports Abul Fazl by saying (Elliot, V, p. 425) that His Majesty having conferred Kabul upon Mirza Hakīm turned towards Hindustan. From Akbar's attitude it is reasonable to think that the Indian historians are right. Against Monserrate we have the statement of Abul Fazl (A. N. III, p. 542) that the Mirza wrote to the emperor that he regretted that he could not bring his sister and Khwaja Hasan to make apology for him, for they had, *out of fear and, on seeing his evil day, gone to Badakhshan*.

The success of the Kabul expedition was a great blow to the orthodox rebels, and henceforward the emperor was free to deal with religion as he liked.

A word may be said about Khwaja Mansūr's death. He was executed hastily without sufficient proof. The letters were not examined with care, and no attempt was made to identify the Khwaja's handwriting. The letters seized by Man Singh in Shādmān's baggage do not seem to have been of a serious nature for on their discovery the emperor took no action against the culprit, and kept the contents to himself. The last letters which sealed the fate of the Khwaja were a clear forgery, as is proved by the evidence of Nizamuddin who was an eye-witness of these events. He was present in the royal camp. There is no evidence to prove that the earlier letters were genuine, and Dr. Smith uncritically accepts Monserrate's testimony.

Khwaja Mansūr's death.

It is difficult to set aside Nizamuddin who positively states that the emperor regretted his execution of the Khwaja. Regarding the early letters, Abul Fazl, who is not in any way partial to the Khwaja, says that the sovereign regarded them as the work of forgers, and for this reason did not show them to the Khwaja. Dr. Smith convicts the Khwaja on the evidence of the first batch of letters which Abul Fazl unequivocally describes as forgeries. We cannot accept Monserrate's account in the face of two contemporary writers, one of whom says clearly that the first batch of letters (which Smith holds to be genuine) was a forgery and the other asserts that the last batch of letters on the evidence of which the Khwaja was executed was forged by his enemies. The real explanation of the Khwaja's death is to be found in his own unpopularity and the jealousy of his fellow-officers. Abul Fazl says that from love

There is no reason why Abul Fazl and Nizamuddin should suppress the truth in a matter like this. Hakīm's intention to go to Abdulla Uzbeg further explains Akbar's leniency in dealing with him.

of office and cupidity he was always laying hold of trifles in financial matters and displaying harshness. Those who felt aggrieved by his harsh policy committed forgeries to bring about his fall. The emperor found himself in a difficult situation. He was threatened with the invasion of his kingdom, and hence no scrutiny was ordered into the correspondence of the Khwaja, and he was forthwith ordered to be hanged.

It will be remembered that Akbar had granted a paltry allowance to Muzaffar, king of Gujarat, when he conquered that country. Muzaffar escaped from surveillance in 1578, and took refuge at Junagarh in Kathiawad. In a short time he collected a large force, and with its help captured Ahmadabad in September, 1583, and proclaimed himself king of Gujarat. He seized Cambay, and then marched to Baroda which he easily occupied. Broach followed suit, and the vast treasure which it contained was seized. Probably the whole of Gujarat fell into his (Muzaffar's) hands, and his force quickly numbered 30,000.

Rebellion in Gujarat.

The emperor was disconcerted by the news of Muzaffar's success, and he appointed Mirza Abur Rahim as governor of Gujarat. He defeated Muzaffar in the battle of Sarkhej in January, 1584, and made amends for the mistakes of the previous governors. He entered the capital in triumph and pleased all by his urbanity, tolerance and culture. Muzaffar was pursued by the imperialists, and was again defeated at Nadot in Rajpīpla. As a result of this battle the entire mainland of Gujarat fell into the hands of the imperialists except Baroda, which was also surrendered after a prolonged siege of seven months.

The emperor was delighted to receive the tidings of victory, and bestowed lavish favours upon his officers, who had given proof of their loyalty and courage in Gujarat. Mirza Abdur Rahim was given the title of Khan-i-Khanan, and promoted

to the rank of 5,000. The emperor granted him also a horse, a robe, and a jewelled dagger as a mark of favour. But Abdur Rahim did not enjoy the emperor's bounty alone. Others who had bravely fought during the war were rewarded, and their services were duly recognised. The Khan-i-Khanan was recalled by the emperor in August, 1585, and after his departure Muzaffar made frantic efforts to regain his power. But he was at last captured in 1592 by the imperialists. Finding it impossible to bear the humiliations which he thought were in store for him, he ended his life with a razor which he had kept concealed on his person. Aziz Koka, the imperial general, who had succeeded Abdur Rahim left for Mecca, and Gujarat was entrusted to Prince Murad.

North-West Frontier Policy.

The North-West Frontier problem has always been a source of great anxiety to Indian governments. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries when the Mongols again and again invaded Hindustan, the rulers of Delhi found it necessary to take effective measures to safeguard their forntier. There was an important military outpost at Dipalpur, which was once held by such a redoubtable general as Ghazi Malik, better known in history as Sultan Ghiyas-uddin Tughluq. Since Balban's day, the western frontier had always been guarded by distinguished officers and a chain of military outposts was erected to guard the route of the invader. It was quite natural for Akbar to establish his firm hold on the countries in the north-west.

The elements of danger were two—the Uzbegs and the wild and turbulent Afghan tribes who lived all along the north-west border. Abdulla Uzbeg was a formidable rival, and was likely to gain the sympathies of the orthodox Sunnis against the heretical emperor. The tribes were no less troublesome. They knew nothing of the sentiments of honour and chivalry, and cared nothing for treaties and engagements. Their restlessness always caused disturbance on the frontier, and Akbar was

the first to curb their unruly habits. The task though extremely difficult was accomplished, when Mughal arms were reinforced by Rajput valour and skill. Mirza Hakīm died of his excesses in July, 1585, and Kabul was annexed to the empire. The government of the country was entrusted to Raja Man Singh, and the imperial generals were sent to subdue the ruler of Kashmir and the wild tribes of Swat and Bajaur. The Roshniyas[13] were defeated, and their enthusiastic leader, Jalal, who had planned an invasion of Hindustan was killed at Ghazni towards the close of 1600. His wives and children were captured, and his brother with other relatives numbering 14,000 was sent to the court.

Another tribe which caused much trouble was that of the Yusufzais, whom it was necessary to suppress, in order to deprive Abdulla Uzbeg of an opportunity of fishing in troubled waters. Zain Khan and Raja Birbal marched against them, but their mutual quarrels greatly hampered the progress of military operations. The Afghans profited by the divided counsels of the imperial generals, whom they attacked with great force with arrows and stones. Nearly 8,000 soldiers were killed, and Raja Birbal was himself among the slain. The emperor was deeply grieved to hear of the death of his dear friend, and for two days and nights he did not eat or drink anything. After this disaster Raja Todarmal and Prince Murad were sent against the Afghans at the head of a large army. Todarmal succeeded in crushing the rebels completely, and Abdul Fazl records:

"A large number were killed, and many were sold into Turan and Persia. The country of Sawad (Swat), Bajaur and

13 The Roshniyas were the followers of Bayazid, a religious fanatic, who preached doctrines subversive of the religion of the Prophet of Arabia. He claimed to be a prohept himself and attached no importance to the teachings of the Quran.

Buner which has few equals for climate, fruits and cheapness of food, were cleansed of the evil-doers."

The success of the imperialists made a great impression upon Abdulla Uzbeg who was now convinced of the impossibility of the Indian conquest. He opened friendly negotiations, and sent his envoy to wait upon the emperor.

Conquest of Kashmir, 1586.

Raja Bhagwān Das was sent by the emperor at the head of 5,000 men to accomplish the conquest of Kashmir. The moment was opportune, for the Roshniyas and the Yusufzais had been, by this time, put down, and Abdulla's party at Kabul was paralysed by the vigour and enterprise of the imperialists. The Raja along with Qasim Khan pressed on in spite of difficulties, and compelled Yūsuf, the king of Kashmir, to submit. Yūsuf's son Yāqūb escaped from custody, and desperately struggled in vain to check the advance of the invaders. He was defeated and compelled to surrender. Kashmir was annexed to the empire, and made a part of the Suba of Kabul. Yāqūb and his father were sent as prisoners to Bihar, and were placed under the custody of Raja Man Singh who had been transferred to the charge of Bengal. The emperor paid a personal visit to Kashmir in the summer of 1589, and made arrangements for the proper administration of the country. On his way back he received at Kabul the news of the death of Rajas Bhagwan Das and Todarmal.

Conquest of Sindh, 1591 A.D.

In Northern India only Sindh and Bilochistan were still outside the pale of the empire. The island of Bhakkar had been subdued in 1574, but a large part of southern Sindh was still independent. The emperor highly valued the acquisition of Sindh and Bilochistan, for they would furnish him with an excellent *point d'appui* for the conquest of Qandhar. In 1590 Mirza Abdur Rahim was appointed governor of Multan, and ordered to

extinguish the independence of the principality of Thatta, ruled at this time by Mirza Jani, the Tarkhan. He was defeated in two well contested engagements, and was compelled to surrender both Thatta and the fort of Sehwan. Jani Beg was taken to the court, and through the good offices of the Khan-i-Khanan he was treated with consideration. The principality of Thatta was restored to him as a mark of royal clemency, and he was elevated to the rank of a grandee of 5,000.

Relations with Persia.

Akbar had long desired the possession of Qandhar which was the key to the north-western position. It was not difficult to conquer it as the Shah was troubled at this time by the Turks and the Uzbegs, who were constantly fomenting strife in his dominions. It was this weakness of the Shah which induced the emperor to send an expedition against Qandhar. The campaign was opened in 1590, but the final conquest was not accomplished until 1595, when Qandhar was annexed to the empire without disturbing the friendly relations with the Shah. It was undoubtedly a master-stroke of diplomacy.

Towards the north-west the demonstration of the military strength of the empire had produced a good impression on Abdulla Uzbeg. He dreaded a combination of Akbar and Shah Abbas against himself, and the conclusion of Akbar's campaigns must have given him much satisfaction. Henceforward, he tried to maintain friendly relations with the empire. There was no possibility of an Uzbeg invasion of India and of taking advantage of the emperor's difficulties with his own co-religionists.

Conquest of Ahmadnagar.

Having made himself master of the whole of Hindustan and the Afghan regions beyond the Hindukush, Akbar turned towards the Deccan. It was the dissensions of the Muhammadan kingdoms which paved the way for the conquest. The first to bear the brunt of the imperial force was the small state of Ahmad-

nagar which was torn by internal dissensions. Taking advantage of these quarrels, the Mughals laid siege to Ahmadnagar, but they encountered a formidable resistance at the hands of the famous princess Chand Bibi, sister of Burhan Nizam Shah.[14] The gallant princess herself conducted the defence, and throughout the siege displayed uncommon powers of command and organisation. Treachery at last brought about her fall. She was murdered; and the town was captured by assault in 1600 and Ahmadnagar was annexed to the empire. There are few examples of such heroism and self-sacrifice in Mughal history, and Chand Bibi is still remembered for her courageous attempt to roll back the tide of Mughal conquest in the Deccan.

Siege of Asirgarh.

Miran Bahadur, the new ruler of Khandesh, entertained no friendly feelings towards the Mughals, and felt anxious to shake off the imperial yoke. The emperor had already occupied Burhanpur, but Miran relied for his safety upon the fortress of Asirgarh which was deemed impregnable in the south. It commanded the main road to the Deccan.

There are three conflicting accounts of the siege given by Abul Fazl, Faizi Sarhindi, and the Jesuits of which the last has

14 Burhan Nizam Shah II died on April 13, 1595, and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Nizam Shah who was not liked by a majority of the Amirs, because he was born of an African woman. Ibrahim was slain in a battle against the Bijapuris on August 7, 1595, and his Wazir Miyan Manjhū raised to the throne a supposititious son of Muhammad Khudabanda, sixth son of Burhan Nizam Shah I (1509—53) and imprisoned Bahadur, son of Ibrahim Nizam Shah, in the fort of Jond. The African Amirs who knew Ahmad to be a boy of spurious origin refused to recognise him and broke out into open rebellion. They gave their support to Chand Bibi, daughter of Husain Nizam Shah I and widow of Ali Adil Shah I of Bijapur, who had returned to Ahmadnagar after her husband's death and who now espoused the cause of the lawful heir, the infant Bahadur Nizam Shah. Unable to cope with this powerful coalition, the Wazir solicited the aid of Prince Murad who was then in Gujarat.

been accepted in its entirety by Dr. Vincent Smith. But there is no reason why the account of the Jesuits should be preferred to that of the Muslim historians. There is an air of unreality about the Jesuit version, which will be easily understood by anyone used to weigh historical evidence.

Abul Fazl's version, shorn of its verbiage, establishes these facts. Some time after the siege sickness broke out in the fortress which caused many deaths. The capture of Maligarh disconcerted the besieged garrison by stopping their exit and entrance. Through the efforts of certain imperial officers an agreement was made with Bahadur who presented himself at court. The garrison was tampered with by the besiegers, and Bahadur was pressed against his will to write a letter to his men asking them to make a surrender. Reading this with Faizi Sarhindi's narrative, we may be able to reconstruct a true account of the siege. Bahadur was induced to open terms with the enemy, and an agreement was entered into with him which was perhaps violated by the emperor. The garrison was seduced from loyalty to Bahadur by means of bribery and not by honeyed words, as Abul Fazl characteristically puts it. Bahadur was coerced when he was in the hands of the emperor, to sign a letter to the garrison of which mention has already been made. The surrender was in part influenced also by the fall of Ahmadnagar in 1600, which must have greatly damped the spirits of Miran's captains and men. Dr. Smith charges the emperor with perfidy, and says that he employed treachery to capture the fortress. He disbelieves the Muslim chroniclers whom he accuses of deliberate falsehood, and writes that they invented the story of the epidemic in order to hide the treachery of their patron. This is not quite correct.

No attempt is made in the *Akbarnamah* to disguise the fact that Bahadur was induced to come out of his fortress and his troops were tampered with. Dr. Smith's statement that

Abul Fazl attributes the surrender of the fort to pestilence is wholly unfounded. The *Akbarnamah* does not say anything of the kind. It simply says, the garrison was attacked by a pestilence which killed 25,000 people. Dr. Smith looks upon the pestilence as an invention to hide Akbar's treachery, but it is not clear why all these writers should indulge in wanton falsehood. Firishta whose sources for the Deccan history are reliable supports Abul Fazl, and says that on account of congestion in the fort a pestilence broke out which ' swept off several of the garrison.' Dr. Smith attaches little value to the *Akbarnamah* of Faizi Sarhindi, because he uncritically accepts Prof. Dowson's view that it is nothing more than a compilation based in part on the *Akbarnamah* of Abul Fazl. Now, a comparison of the two texts will make it clear that they differ materially from each other. Faizi says many things which are omitted in Abul Fazl whose account of the siege is a highly condensed one. Dr. Smith condemns in strong language the action of the emperor, though at the end of his narrative, he adds that such practices were common in India and elsewhere in Akbar's age, and are still prevalent in Europe. There is no need to set up a defence of the emperor's conduct during the siege. It is true that Bahadur was detained in the imperial camp, that the garrison was enticed by means of bribery, and that the Sultan was coerced into writing letters of authority for the garrison to surrender against his will. Probably the emperor was excited to a high pitch by the stubborn resistance of the beleaguered garrison, and found the prolongation of the siege inadvisable in view of Salim's revolt in Northern India. The prestige of the empire also demanded that Asirgarh should be captured by any means. Considerations such as these urged the emperor to employ bribery to gain his end, and in apportioning blame we ought to bear in mind the difficulties and anxieties of a statesman, whose reputation was staked on the success or failure of a single siege.

Growth of the Empire—A Résumé.

Akbar's whole career of conquest may be conveniently divided into three periods, the conquest of Northern India from 1558—76, the subjugation of the North-West Frontier tribes from 1580—96, and the conquest of the Deccan from 1598—1601 A.D. The expansion of the empire began early in the reign (1558—60) with the reconquest of Gwalior in Central India, Ajmer in the heart of Rajputana, and Jaunpur, the stronghold of the Sur Afghans in the east. The conquest of Malwa was effected in 1561-62 by Pir Muhammad and Adham Khan, and the fort of Maitra in Rajputana which commanded an important military position was captured about the same time. In 1564 the country of Gondwana, ruled by the noble Rani Durgāvatī, was invaded by Asaf Khan, and its independence was destroyed. After his alliance with Bhārmal of Amber, the numerous chieftains of Rajputana came under his vassalage. The first to be conquered was the fort of Chittor in 1567, and its fall was followed by the surrender of Ranthambhor and Kalanjar, and the submission of the princes of Jesalmir, Bikanir, and Jodhpur. Gujarat was annexed to the empire in 1573 after an arduous military campaign, and was entrusted to Aziz Koka, the emperor's foster-brother and a nobleman of great ability and distinction. This was followed by the conquest of Bengal in 1576 and the extinction of the independent Afghan dynasty. Orissa long remained outside the empire, and was conquered sixteen years later by Raja Man Singh in 1592. Having mastered the Doab, the Punjab, Rajputana, Bengal, Gujarat and the central region, the emperor turned his attention towards the north-west. Kabul passed under imperial control after the death of Mirza Hakīm in 1585, and the Yusufzais were suppressed in 1586. The frontier trouble was set at rest by the conquest of Kashmir in 1586 and the separation of the local Muhammadan dynasty. The imperial cordon was completed towards the north-west by the incor-

poration of Sind in 1591, of Balochistan and the coast of Mekrān in 1594 and the province of Qandhar in 1595. The danger from Abdulla Uzbeg was at an end, and Akbar felt completely secure in the possession of his dominions. The Uzbeg chief's death in 1598 added further to his security by removing from his path a formidable rival, in whom were centred the hopes of the orthodox Sunni revivalists, and by the close of the year the empire included the whole of Kabulistan and Kashmir and the entire northern region north of the Narbada river, from Bengal and Orissa in the east to Sindh and Balochistan in the west.

Having rid of all his rivals in the north-west, the emperor set out to conquer the Deccan. The Nizam-Shahi kingdom found it difficult to resist the advance of the Mughals, and after the death of Chand Bibi Ahmadnagar was annexed in 1600. Finally, the capture of Asirgarh in 1601 completed the process of imperial expansion which had begun in 1558, and the empire became the largest, the most powerful, and the richest in the world.

Akbar was by nature a man of liberal ideas and his outlook on social and religious matters was considerably changed by his marriage with the Rajput princesses and his constant association with Hindu officers, thinkers, and religious preachers. He introduced a number of regulations to mitigate the evil influence of the unwholesome social usages that had existed in India since the beginning of Muslim rule. He abolished the enslavement of the conquered enemies, and issued an order that no soldier of the victorious armies should in any part of his dominions molest the wives and children of the vanquished.[15] Soon after his marriage with the princess of Amber he remitted in 1563 the pilgrim tax which yielded an income of crores. In 1564 the

Akbar's reforms.

15 A. N. II, p. 246.

emperor abolished the Jeziya throughout his dominions, and by doing so soothed the hearts of the Hindus who disliked this tax more than anything else.[16] Knowing full well what the abolition of such an impost meant, the emperor described his edict as 'the foundation of the arrangement of mankind.' He carried the measure through in the teeth of the opposition of his statesmen, and revenue officers and the 'chatter of the ignorant.'[17] The system of administration was considerably reformed, and the plans of improvement were formulated during the years 1573-74. With the advice of Todarmal the emperor issued the branding regulations, and put an end to the evil of the Jagir system by converting the jagirs into crown lands and by paying salaries to his officers.[18] The imperial mint was thoroughly reorganised, and the new regulations ensured the excellence of the coinage. The coins were of pure metal and exact weight, and were manufactured by skilled workmen.

The emperor did not neglect social reform. He condemned the practice of Sati, and issued a decree that no woman should be burnt against her will, and in one case he personally intervened to save the life of a Rajput lady, whose relatives forced her to perish in the flames along with her husband.[19] In every city and district 'vigilant and truthful' inspectors were appointed to distinguish between voluntary and forced Sati and to prevent the latter.[20] The Kotwals were ordered to stop the evil, and one of the *Ains* clearly states that they were not

16 Ibid., p. 316.

17 Ibid., III, p. 316.

18 Ibid., III, p. 95.

19 When Jayamal, a cousin of Raja Bhagwan Das, died in the eastern provinces, his widow, a daughter of Udaya Singh or Mota Raja, refused to be a Sati. Akbar rode hastily to the spot, and prevented her relatives from compelling her to burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband.

20 Ain, III, p. 42.

to suffer a woman to be burnt against her inclination.[21] The emperor held highly progressive views on the question of marriage. He disapproved of marriage before the age of puberty.[22] He looked with disfavour on marriages between near relatives and high dowries, though he admitted that they were preventives against rash divorce.[23] In theory he condemned polygamy, for 'this ruins a man's health, and disturbs the peace of the home.' He looked upon the marriage of old women with young men as highly undesirable, and appointed officers to enquire into the circumstances of brides and bridegrooms.[24] His views on educational matters were better and more tolerant than those of other Muslim rulers. He encouraged the study of Sanskrit and extended his patronage to Hindu scholars. Among the 21 men of learning, placed by Abul Fazl in the first class, nine are Hindus.[25] Hindu physicians are mentioned in the *Ain*, and one Chandra Sena who was patronised by the court is described in the *Tabqāt* as an excellent surgeon. One innovation which was much disliked by the orthodox was the *Sijdah* or the ceremony of prostration which the emperor encouraged among the members of the *Din-i-illahi*.[26] Abul Fazl writes that as there was opposition to it on the ground that it savoured of 'blasphemous man-worship,' the emperor discontinued it, and did not allow even his private attendants to do it in the *Durbar-i-am*.[27] But even he admits that in the private apartments of the emperor the *Sijdah* continued, and men were allowed 'to participate in the

21 Ibid., p. 595.
22 Ibid., p. 277.
23 Ibid., p. 278.
24 Ibid., p. 27.
25 Ibid., p. 538.
26 Ibid., p. 158-59.
27 Ain, I. p. 159.
The *sijdah* was stopped, but the *taslim* or *cornish* continued throughout the reign.

halo of good fortune.'[28] Besides these there were several ordinances relating to the religious and social practices enjoined by Islam, which will be discussed in giving an account of the emperor's religious views.

Treatment of the Hindus.

The first Muslim ruler who proclaimed peace and goodwill as the foundation of his government was Sher Shah who effaced all distinctions between the Hindus and Muslims. Akbar went farther than Sher Shah, and renounced the principle of *Sulh-i-kul* (universal toleration) which at once went to strike deep into the hearts of his subjects the roots of his empire. Under the influence of his Hindu wives, he tolerated the Hindu mode of worship, and openly listened to the teachings of Hindu saints and philosophers. His marriage policy left no bitterness behind in the minds of the Hindus, and proved a healer of ancient discords and deep-rooted antagonisms. The ladies admitted into the imperial *haram* were accorded the highest honours, and the emperor lavished his care and affection upon them without the slightest consideration of caste or creed. There had been marriages before between the Hindus and Muslims in the north as well as in the south, but they were not accompanied by a policy of conciliation, and their result was often to widen the breach between the two parties. Akbar's policy is in striking contrast with that of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, Firūz Tughluq or the Bahmani and Vijayanagar kings. The Rajputs, who entered into marriage relations with Akbar, were treated as equals for all practical purposes. They were admitted to the highest offices in the state. They were granted *mansabs*, and were entrusted with the command of the most important expeditions. Raja Birbal, Raja Todarmal, Raja Bhagwān Das, Raja Man Singh were the trusted servants and intimate friends of the emperor, who fully recognised their

28 Ibid., p. 159.

talents and conferred upon them the highest distinctions. The results of this policy were seen in the improved methods of administration and the willing homage of the non-Muslim population all over Hindustan.

Under Akbar's patronage the Hindu genius soared to a high pitch, and the Hindu mind developed to its fullest extents. It was not only Hindu statesmen and generals who contributed to the glory of the empire but also the numerous poets, scholars, musicians and painters who flocked to his court and looked upon it as a privilege to seek his favour. Some of the greatest Hindi poets lived during his reign, and their works furnish evidence of the conditions which made their works possible. Akbar's sympathy with Hindu religion and his patronage of Hindi literature made a deep impression upon the Hindus. The memories of the past were forgotten, and in their emperor they saw the first national monarch of Hindustan.

Rebellion of Prince Salim.

When Akbar left for the Deccan, he placed Salim in charge of the capital and asked him to commence operations against Mewar along with Raja Man Singh and Shah Quli Khan. But Salim did not carry out his father's orders. His impatience to seize the throne urged him to make an attempt at usurping the insignia of royalty before his time. When he was reproached for his misconduct by the dowager queen Mariyam Makānī, he left Agra and went to Allahabad where he declared his independence and bestowed jagirs and titles on his associates and supporters. Akbar, on hearing the news of this rebellion in the Deccan, returned to the capital, and issued an order to Salim, who was advancing towards Agra, asking him to dismiss his men and wait upon him or to go back to Allahabad. Salim retreated to Allahabad, but there he set up as king, and opened intrigues with the Portuguese, and solicited their assistance in his designs.

The emperor in this crisis summoned Abul Fazl from the Deccan, but the latter was murdered on his way by Bir Singh Bundela whom Salim had hired for the purpose in August, 1602. Akbar's grief was terrible. He passed 24 hours in a writhing agony and exclaimed, 'If Salim wished to be emperor he might have killed me and spared Abul Fazl.'

Akbar sent his officers to punish the murderous Bundela chief, but he successfully eluded his pursuers. Salim escaped punishment through the good offices of Sultana Salimā Begum, who brought about a reconciliation between father and son. Out of his usual generosity the emperor pardoned his offence, and once again publicly declared him as his heir-apparent. But this kindness had no effect on Salim. He went to Allahabad and again set up an independent state.

Intrigues against Salim.

Meanwhile the imperial court was the scene of the worst intrigues. A plot was formed to deprive Salim of succession to the throne, and was joined by such grandees of the empire as Raja Man Singh and Aziz Koka. They were actuated by personal and political reasons to set aside the claims of Salim in favour of Khusrau, Salim's eldest son, a young lad of 17, who had married Aziz Koka's daughter. Khusrau keenly interested himself in the schemes of the conspirators, and disregarded his mother's advice to give up his unfilial designs. Prince Daniyal died of the effects of intemperance in April, 1604, and his death removed from Salim's path one more rival. But he did not desist from his evil course.[29] At last Akbar started for Allahabad in person (August, 1604) to chastise the prince, but he had not gone far when the news of the serious illness of his mother obliged him to come back hastily to Agra. Frightened by the emperor's decision to deal with him in

[29] Prince Murad had already died in May 1599 in Deccan.

person and by the news of the conspiracy of Man Singh and Aziz Koka, Salim also came to Agra with the ostensible purpose of expressing his sorrow at the death of his grandmother. A reconciliation was brought about by the ladies of the imperial *haram*, and Salim was pardoned and restored to the honours he had enjoyed before. But nothing served to heal the breach between the prince and his son Khusrau, who continued to thwart his father's wishes and indulge in acts of ungratefulness. The unworthy conduct of these princes greatly disturbed the emperor's peace of mind, and he fell ill. Fever accompanied by diarrhœa or dysentery confined the emperor to bed, and in a few days his condition became so bad that his physicians gave up all hope of recovery.

Failure of the plot.

Meanwhile the plot to supersede Salim had been going on. The leaders of the conspiracy tried to effect their purpose by arresting Prince Salim, but he proved too clever for them. Foiled in this attempt, they held a conference of the nobles and officers of the realm, and openly urged the suppression of Salim by Khusrau. The proposal was opposed by several officers on the ground that it was against the principles of natural justice as also the laws of the Turks to set aside a son in favour of a grandson. The opponents of Salim gradually melted away, and many of them gave their adhesion to the prince whose claims they had so stoutly resisted a short time before. Aziz Koka himself acknowledged the prince's claim, and Raja Man Singh left for Bengal with Prince Khusrau.

Death of Akbar.

Having received the support of the nobles and grandees of the empire, Salim screwed up courage to wait on his father. Akbar's malady had far advanced, and it was clear that the end was not far off. He could not speak, but he retained enough consciousness to understand what was passing around him. When Salim had apologised for his misconduct by prostrating

before him, he beckoned to him to don the imperial robes, and to gird himself with the sword of Humayun which lay near his bed. Salim obeyed the command and left the room in accordance with the royal wish. Soon afterwards the emperor died early in the morning on October 17, 1605. A stately funeral was arranged in which the highest dignitaries of the empire took part, and Salim himself like a dutiful son carried the bier on his shoulders to some distance. The emperor's body was buried in a tomb at Sikandara which he had commenced to build during his lifetime. It was completed by his son, and still remains a striking example of Mughal architecture.

Among all the Muslim kings who swayed the sceptre in Hindustan Akbar was the most liberal exponent of religious toleration. The 16th century was an age of enquiry and doubt, and Akbar was its most perfect representative. The ground had already been prepared for him by Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya and other reformers who had inveighed against the tyranny of caste, emphasised the unity of the Godhead, and pointed out the utter hollowness of distinctions between man and man. Attempts had been made in the past to bring the Hindus and Muslims in closer contact, and although they paid homage to common saints and venerated common shrines, no appreciable measure of success was achieved in the field of politics. They still stood apart from each other, and the Muslim divines still contended that any concession to the infidel population implied a deviation from the path of orthodox piety. The 'Ulama dominated the state and acted as the guides of rulers and statesmen. Akbar who fully understood the centrifugal tendencies of Indian history saw the need of reconciling the Hindus to Muslim rule, and resolved to shake off the yoke of the canonical order and to evolve a policy which would ultimately lead to the fusion of the two races.

Characteristics of the age.

Besides this political and mundane motive there was the eager craving of his soul to know the truth. Badāoni relates that often in the early hours of the morning he would sit on a large flat stone of an old building, which lay near the palace at Fatehpur in a secluded spot with his head bent over his chest, and meditated on the eternal mystery of life. His heart ached to see the differences of mankind. The Sunnis, Shias, Mehdwis, and Sufis held divergent doctrines and often quarrelled amongst themselves. He hoped to end their quarrels, and cherished the dream of arriving at a synthesis of the warring creeds and to unite into an organic whole the heterogeneous elements which constituted his vast empire. The bigotry of the Ulama disguested him and alienated him from Islam. He developed eclectic tendencies, and began to indulge in metaphysical discussions, the result of which soon became manifest in a complete reversal of the traditional policy of the Muslim State in India.

Akbar's religious aim.

It is interesting to trace the history of the development of the emperor's religious ideas. First, there was the influence of heredity which did not a little to make his attitude liberal in matters of faith. His father and grandfather were never orthodox; his mother was the daughter of a man of Shia tendencies and she impressed upon his mind in early youth the value and necessity of tolerance. Then there was his marriage with the Rajput princesses whose entry into the imperial *haram* by means of lawful *nikah* wrought a profound change in his life. The emperor continued to conform to the Sunni formulæ in all outward observances until 1575, but a great change came over him when Shaikh Mubarak and his two sons Faizi and Abul Fazl, who were gifted with extraordinary intellectual powers, exerted a powerful influence on his mind, and led him astray from orthodox Islam, and opened

The Great Change.

to him a new world of thought and action. They were Sufis who believed that the diverse creeds were only manifestations of the desire to know the truth, and laid stress upon the spirit underlying all religions rather than upon the forms in which they were clothed. The Sufi doctrine marked a rebellion against the letter of the law, and its exponents urged free thought as the primary condition of spiritual advancement. Sufism is very much like Vedāntic philosophy, which teaches that the individual souls are only manifestations of the supreme soul in which they are finally immersed. Akbar who had leanings towards Sufism from his early youth heartily accepted the ideas of Mubarak and his sons, who were assisted in their endeavours by Shaikh Tajuddin of Delhi, who enjoyed the emperor's confidence. Like his friends, he desired to attain eternal beatitude by having direct communion with the Divine Reality.

Debates at Fatehpur.

The mystic vein of the emperor developed as time passed. In 1575 he ordered a new building to be constructed at Fatehpur-Sikri called the *Ibādatkhana* where the professors of different faiths were to assemble and to hold religious discussions. It was to be 'a refuge for Sufis and a home for holy men into which none should be allowed to enter but Saiyyads of high rank, learned men and Shaikhs.' Here came professors of different creeds, Brahmans, Jains, Parsis, Christians and Muslims from all parts of the country to assist the emperor in finding a solution of the problem that oppressed his soul. The author of the *Zabd-ut-tawarikh* writes that he gave the most deliberate attention to all that he heard, for his mind was solely bent upon ascertaining the truth. To the assembled doctors he said: "My sole object, Oh Wise Mullas! is to ascertain truth, to find out and disclose the principles of genuine religion, and to trace it to the divine origin: Take care, therefore, that through the influence of your human passions you are not

induced to conceal the truth : and say nothing contrary to the almighty decrees. If you do, you are responsible before God for the consequences of your impiety." The theological debate raged loud and fierce, and the protagonists of rival sects tried to tear one another in argument. They found it difficult to control their passions which often burst out in highly undignified scenes. The leaders of the orthodox party were Shaikh Makhdūm-ul-Mulk and Shaikh Abdunnabi whereas the free thinkers were represented by such men as Mubarak. Abul Faizi, Abul Fazl and Raja Birbal. The orthodox quarrelled among themselves, and the most notable quarrel was that of these two Shaikhs. They engaged themselves in a violent controversy in which they used abusive language towards each other to the delight of their opponents. But more violent and bitter were the attacks made on the heterodox section by the canonists, who waxed eloquent with fury in denouncing their ways and practices. The Shias looked on with secret satisfaction while the blows were delivered upon their Sunni opponents, and helped in the circulation of lampoons and satires. The Mullas expressed their disapproval of the manner in which the most solemn subjects were discussed, and notwithstanding the fact that the emperor was present throughout the discussions they often indulged in abusive and filthy language. Badāoni has described the scene in his own way :

"The learned men used to draw the sword of the tongue on the battlefield of mutual contradiction and opposition, and the antagonism of the sects reached such a pitch that they would call one anoher fools and heretics. The controversies used to pass beyond the differences of Sunni and Shiah, of Hanafi and Shafi, of lawyer and divine, and they would attack the very bases of belief."[30]

[30] Al-Badāoni, II, p. 262.

His Majesty propounded several questions to the Muslim doctors of the orthodox party, but their answers did not satisfy him. He became convinced of the futility of their doctrines and turned to other teachers for light. There were Hindu spiritualists who explained to him the tenets of their faiths, and urged him on to pursue the quest of truth with greater enthusiasm and determination. The emperor granted interviews to learned Brahmans, the chief of whom were Purshottam and Debi who were invited to explain the principles of their religion. Debi was pulled up the wall of the palace in a charpai to the balcony where the emperor used to sleep, and suspended thus between heaven and earth, the Brahman philosopher 'instructed His Majesty in the secrets and legends of Hinduism, in the manner of worshipping idols, the fire, the sun and stars and of reverencing the chief gods of the Hindus—Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and the goddess Mahāmāi.' He expounded to him, the doctrine of metempsychosis which the emperor approved by saying, 'there is no religion in which the doctrine of transmigration has not taken firm root.' It was not Brahmanism alone to the doctrines of which he lent a willing ear. He took equal interest in Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Sikhism, to the professors of which he extended a warm welcome.

Non-Muslim influences.

The Jain teachers who are said to have greatly influenced the emperor's religious outlook were Hīravijaya Sūri, Vijayasena Sūri, Bhānuchandra Upādhyāya, and Jinachandra. From 1578 onwards one or two Jain teachers always remained at the court of the emperor. From the first he received instructions in the Jain doctrine at Fatehpur, and received him with great courtesy and respect. The last is reported to have converted the emperor to Jainism, but this statement cannot be accepted any more than the belief of the Jesuits that he had become a Christian. Yet the Jains exercised a far greater influence on his habits and mode of life than the Jesuits. In 1582 the

emperor invited Hīravijaya Sūri to his court, and it was at his instance that he released prisoners and caged birds, and prohibited the slaughter of animals on certain days. Eleven years later another Jain teacher Siddhachandra paid a visit to the emperor at Lahore, and was fitly honoured. He obtained several concessions for his co-religionists. The tax on pilgrims to the Śatrunjaya hills was abolished, and the holy places of the Jains were placed under their control. In short, Akbar's giving up of meat and the prohibition of injury to animal life were due to the influence of Jain teachers.

The Parsis or followers of Zoroaster also attended the imperial court and took part in the religious debates. Badāoni writes that they 'impressed the emperor so favourably that he learned from them the religious terms and rules of the old Parsis and ordered Abul Fazl to make arrangements that sacred fire should be kept burning at the court at all hours of the day according to their custom.' The Parsi theologian Dastur Meherjee Rana who lived at Navasari in Gujarat initiated the emperor in the mysteries of Zoroastrianism. He was received well at court and was granted 200 bighas of land as a mark of royal favour. The emperor adopted the worship of the sun, the principal fountain of all fire, and in this he was encouraged by his friend and companion Raja Bīrbal. His interest in Christianity was equally keen. He sent for the Christian Fathers from Goa to instruct him in the tenets of their faith. But the Fathers were tactless enough to abuse the indulgence shown to them by the emperor by vilifying the Prophet, and making unworthy attacks upon the Quran, so much so indeed, that on one occasion the life of Father Rodolfo was in peril, and the emperor had to provide a special guard to protect his person. It does not appear that the Jesuits did anything more than give intellectual satisfaction to the emperor, whose philosophical earnestness knew no bounds, and who wished to explore all avenues of truth. Dr. Vincent Smith is undoubtedly

guilty of exaggeration when he says that the contribution made by the Christians to the debates at Fatehpur-Sikri was an important factor among the forces which led Akbar to renounce the Muslim religion.

The emperor felt a great regard for the Sikh Gurus also, and on one occasion at the Guru's request he remitted a year's revenue for the benefit of the ryots in the Punjab. He felt a great admiration for the Granth Sahib, and once observed that it was 'a volume worthy of reverence.'

The causes that have been mentioned before shook the emperor's loyalty to orthodox Islam. He clearly saw the danger of allowing too much power to the Ulama. He would not allow them to be the sole arbiters of disputed questions, and wished to unite in his own person the power of the state, and the functions of the supreme Pontiff of the Muslim Church. He proposed to read the *Khutba* from the pulpit in the Fatehpur mosque which was composed by Faizi for the occasion. It ran as follows :

The Imperial Khutba.

"In the name of Him who gave us sovereignty,
Who gave us a wise heart and a strong arm,
Who guided us in equity and justice,
Who put away from our heart aught but equity ;
His praise is beyond the range of our thoughts,
Exalted be His Majesty—' Allāh-u-Akbar ! ' "

According to Badāoni, as the emperor began to read the *Khutba*, he became nervous, and his voice trembled and he handed over the duties of the Imam to the royal Khatīb, but he is not supported by Abul Fazl who asserts that the emperor 'several times distributed enlightenment in the chief mosque of the capital and the audience gathered bliss.' There was flutter in the orthodox circles at the incident, but the emperor was not to be deterred by the clamour of bigots and zealots from the

path he had chosen for himself. The phrase Allāh-u-Akbar was construed to mean that Akbar is God, and the orthodox insisted on this interpretation with characteristic pertinacity in spite of the emperor's avowals to the contrary.

The so-called Infallibility Decree.

But more objectionable than the reading of this *Khutba* was the emperor's assumption of the rôle of *mujtahid* at the suggestion of Shaikh Mubarak. As a result of this step he was to become the supreme arbiter in all causes, whether ecclesiastical or civil, like Henry VIII of England. In 1579 the leading 'Ulama agreed to declare him the *Imām-i-ādil* (*mujtahid*), the final interpreter of Muslim Law. Shaikh Mubarak hastily drew up a document which he signed 'with the utmost willingness.' An English translation of the document is given below:

'Whereas Hindustan is now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and beneficence, a large number of people, especially learned men and lawyers, have immigrated and chosen this country for their home.

'Now we the principal 'Ulama who are not only well-versed in the several departments of the Law and in the principles of Jurisprudence, and well-acquainted with the edicts which rest on reason or testimony, but are also known for our piety and honest intentions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first, of the verse of the Koran:—

> "Obey God, and obey the Prophet, and those who have authority among you," and secondly, of the genuine tradition:
>
> "Surely the man who is dearest to God on the day of judgment is the Imām-i-ādil; whosoever obeys the Amir, obeys Thee, and whosoever rebels against him, rebels against Thee."
>
> "And thirdly, of several other proofs based on reasoning or testimony; and we have agreed that the rank of

Sultān-i-ādil is higher in the eyes of God than the rank of a *Mujtahid.*"

'Further, we declare that the King of Islam, Amir of the Faithful, Shadow of God in the world, Abul Fath Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar Padshah Ghazi (whose kingdom God perpetuate!) is a most just, a most wise, and a most God-fearing king.

'Should, therefore, in future a religious question come up, regarding which the opinions of the *Mujtahids* are at variance, and His Majesty, in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation and as a political expedient any of the conflicting opinions which exist on that point, and should issue a decree to that effect—

'We do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on us and on the whole nation.

'Further, we declare that should His Majesty think fit to issue a new order, we and the nation shall likewise be bound by it; Provided always, that such order be not only in accordance with some verse of the Quran, but also of real benefit to the nation; and further, that any opposition on the part of his subjects to such an order passed by His Majesty shall involve damnation in the world to come and loss of property and religious privileges in this.

'This document has been written with honest intentions, for the glory of God and the propagation of the Islam, and is signed by us, the principal Ulama and lawyers, in the month of Rajab in the year nine hundred and eighty-seven (987).'[31]

Criticism of the Decree.

This document acted like a bombshell in orthodox circles. It declared the emperor the spiritual as well as the temporal head of his subjects. Henceforward he was to be the umpire in all religious disputes, and his interpretation was binding on all, if it was

31 Badāoni, II, p. 279.

not in conflict with the Quran, and if it was not detrimental to the interests of the nation. It was this qualifying clause which really limited the emperor's authority, but the orthodox refused to notice it and levelled all kinds of charges against him. Dr. Vincent Smith, following Badāoni and the Jesuits, writes that in the course of a year or two Akbar definitely ceased to be a Muslim, and adopted a policy of calculated hypocrisy. There is no evidence to justify this assertion. The orthodox section did not understand the emperor's policy and regarded his quest of truth as a step towards the renunciation of Islam. Abul Fazl gives us the real cause of dissatisfaction with the emperor's policy when he says:

> "An impure faction reproached the caravan-leader of God-knowers with being of the Hindu (Brahman) religion. The ground for this improper notion was that the prince out of his wide tolerance received Hindu sages into his intimacy, and increased for administrative reasons the rank of Hindus, and for the good of the country showed them kindness. Three things supported the evil-minded gossips. First,—the sages of different religions assembled at court, and as every religion has some good in it, each received some praise. From a spirit of justice, the badness of any sect could not weave a veil over its merits. Second,—the reason of 'Peace with all, (*sulh kul*) was honoured at the court of the Caliphate, and various tribes of mankind of various natures obtained spiritual and material success. Third,—the evil nature and crooked ways of the base ones of the age."[32]

The truth of the matter is that the emperor was disgusted with the bigotry of the 'Ulama, and was planning a new synthesis of the conflicting creeds with a view to find a common basis which might be acceptable to all. He did not claim to

[32] Akbarnamah, III, p. 400.

be a prophet nor did he approve of his own apotheosis. His belief in Divine Right should not be confounded with claim to be called a prophet. Like all 16th century kings he held kingship to be divinely ordained, and this belief was shared by his Hindu and Muslim contemporaries all over Hindustan. His real object was to unite the peoples of his empire into an organic whole by supplying a common bond. This he hoped to accomplish by founding the *Din-i-Ilahi* or the Divine Faith.

Promulgation of the Din-i-Ilahi.

The new religion was officially promulgated in the year 1581. It was an eclectic pantheism, containing the good points of all religions—a combination of mysticism, philosophy and nature worship. Its basis was rational ; it upheld no dogma, recognised no gods or prophets, and the emperor was its chief exponent. Badāoni's description of the new faith by the phrase *Tauhid-i-Ilahi*, a divine monotheism, is incorrect, for as Count Von Noer says all the practices and observances of this new cult indicated that it was based upon a pantheistic idea. The emperor's Sufi leanings, his appreciation of Hindu religion, and his keen interest in rational enquiry and philosophical discussion led him to regard all religions as different roads leading to the same goal. Abul Fazl thus states his position :

> " He now is the spiritual guide of the nation and sees in the performance of this duty a means of pleasing God. He has now opened the gate that leads to the right path, and satisfies the thirst of all that wander about panting for truth."[33]

Again the following inscription penned by Abul Fazl for a temple in Kashmir expresses with great force the emperor's attitude in religious matters :

[33] Ain, I, p. 164.

'O God, in every temple I see people that seek Thee,
And in every language I hear spoken, people praise Thee!
Polytheism and Islam after Thee,
Each religion says, "Thou art one without equal."
If it be a mosque, people murmur the holy prayer,
And if it be a Christian Church, people ring the bell from love to Thee.
Sometimes I frequent the Christian cloister and sometimes the mosque,
But it is Thou whom I search from temple to temple.
Thy elect have no dealings with either heresy or orthodoxy; for neither of them stands behind the screen of Thy truth.
Heresy to the heretic, and religion to the orthodox.
But the dust of the rose petal belongs to the heart of the perfume-seller.

Rites of the Din-i-llahi.

Abul Fazl gives an account of the Divine Faith in *Ain* No. 77 and describes the rite of initiation and other observances to which a person desiring to become a member had to conform. The members of the Divine Faith on meeting each other uttered the words *Allah-u-Akbar* and *Jalla Jallalhu*. A dinner during lifetime was to take the place of the dinner usually given after a man's death. Members were to abstain from meat, although they were asked to allow others to eat it, but during the month of their birth they were not allowed even to approach meat.[34] They were not to dine with the butchers, fishermen, and bird-catchers and others of such low type. Each member was to give a party on the anniversary of his birthday and give a sumptuous feast. He was to bestow alms and prepare provisions for the long journey. There were four degrees of devotion to His Majesty. Badāoni writes of them: 'The four degrees consisted in readiness to sacrifice to the Emperor, Property, Life, Honour, and Religion. Whoever had sacrificed these four things possessed the four degrees; and whoever had

34 See A. N. and Ain, 77.

sacrificed one of these four possessed one degree. All the courtiers now put down their names as faithful disciples of the Throne!'

The Emperor, not a missionary.

The emperor did not promulgate the new faith in the spirit of a missionary, zealous for obtaining recruits. His object was not proselytisation but a new synthesis of the warring creeds. He approached the whole question in what we might call a theosophical spirit, and inculcated no rigid formulæ; instead he appealed to the judgment of those who listened to him. Rajas Bhagwān Das and Man Singh, if Badāoni is to be believed, gave a curt refusal when he asked them to join the new cult. He never compelled his numerous officers to follow him though nothing would have been easier for him to do. On the contrary, he emphasised the value of independent judgment, and appealed to men's higher conscience to see through the veil of superstition, dogma, and ecclesiastical formalism. The *Ain* mentions 18 members of the *Din-i-Ilahi* among whom the most prominent are Abul Fazl, Faizi, Shaikh Mubarak, Mirza Jani of Thatta and Aziz Koka whose faith in Islam was shaken by the greed of the harpies of the Meccan shrines. The only Hindu to join was Raja Birbal whose cosmopolitan views won for him the confidence and affection of the emperor. According to Badāoni members had to sign a declaration to the effect that they had abjured Islam, for he says in one place:

"Ten or twelve years later things had come to such a pass that abandoned wretches like Mirza Jani, governor of Thatta, and other apostates wrote their confession to the following effect—this is the form:—

"I, who am so and so, son of so and so, do voluntarily and with sincere predilection and inclination, utterly and entirely renounce and repudiate the religion of Islam which I have seen and heard of my fathers and do embrace the

'Divine Religion' of Akbar Shah, and do accept the four grades of entire devotion, *viz.*, sacrifice of Property, Life, Honour, and Religion."

According to the same writer this declaration was handed over to Abul Fazl and 'became the source of confidence and promotion.'

The promulgation of the *Din-i-Ilahi* was followed by a number of decrees against Islam of which Badāoni has given a detailed account. An orthodox Muslim, he looked upon the emperor's ways with great abhorrence and felt much 'heart-burning for the deceased religion of Islam.' It would be tedious to detail all the regulations issued by the emperor which Badāoni mentions, but it is necessary to refer to some of them in order to understand the charge of seeking to destroy Islam, brought against him by the orthodox section.

Ordinances against Islam.

The Era of the Thousand was stamped on the coins, and a *Tarikh-i-Alfi* commencing with the death of the Prophet was to be written.

Sijdah was to be offered to Kings.

Circumcision was forbidden before the age of 12 and was then left to the will of boys.

Beef was prohibited, and this was due to the 'company of rascally Hindus.' His Hindu wives had created a prejudice in his mind against garlic and onions which were forbidden.

The wearing of beards was discouraged.

The wearing of gold and silk dresses forbidden by the *shariat* was made obligatory.

The flesh of the wild boar and tiger was permitted, and the emperor ordered swine and dogs to be kept in the *haram* and under the fort and '*regarded the going to look at them every morning as a religious service*.'[35]

35 Al-Badāoni, II, p. 314.

Public prayers and the *azan* (call to prayer) were abolished. Muslim names such as Ahmad, Muhammad and Mustafā became so offensive to His Majesty that he got them changed to other names. The fast of Ramzān and pilgrimage to Mecca were prohibited. The study of Arabic was looked upon as a 'crime' and Muslim Law, the *Quran* and the *Hadis* were all tabooed. Their place was taken by mathematics, astronomy, poetry, medicine, history and fiction which were assiduously cultivated.

Boys were not to be married before the age of 16 and girls before 14, because the offspring of such marriages were bound to be weak and sickly.

Mosques and prayer rooms were changed into store rooms and guard rooms.

As the reader will easily perceive, some of these regulations are absurd. Is it conceivable that a tolerant and liberal-minded ruler like Akbar, who respected all religions, should have regarded the going to look at swine and dogs as an act of religious merit?

Criticism of Badāoni.

Badāoni's diatribe, couched in language worthy of a gloomy religious fanatic, whose heart is entirely unillumined by the light of reason, and whose intellect is cramped by sectarian studies as his own admissions so profusely illustrate, extends over hundreds of pages, and his narrative is frequently disfigured by his ravings against the Hindus whom he cannot bear to see in positions of power and influence at court. The only other evidence which supports him is that of the Jesuits, but it should be borne in mind that they took their cue from the orthodox section, which had declared war against the emperor. Most of Badāoni's statements are based upon hearsay, as is shown by the trend of his narrative. There is no evidence to prove that he had personal knowledge of all the facts which he relates, or that he ever tried to ascertain the truth.

It is idle to discuss whether Akbar renounced Islam or not. He organised a brotherhood in which the intellectuals could join. It was an association of students and free thinkers who had transcended the barriers of sect and creed and shaken off the tyrannous yoke of age-long customs. It is not necessary for us to probe too closely into the rules and regulations for its organisation and discipline. Imperfections are inseparable from detail, and the student of history will do well to keep in mind the lofty aim of the emperor and the steadfastness with which he pursued it.

Din-i-Ilahi, a brotherhood of intellectuals.

The success or failure of the *Din-i-Ilahi* as a cult is not a matter of importance. Politically it produced wholly beneficial results. Dr. Vincent Smith denounces it as 'the outcome of ridiculous vanity, a monstrous growth of unrestrained autocracy,' and in another place he observes that it was a 'monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom.' No one will doubt that this view is wholly erroneous, and no one acquainted with the history of Akbar's reign will endorse this unjust criticism of a great man of high aims and noble aspirations. The German historian of Akbar does him greater justice than Dr. Smith, and his estimate is well worthy of reproduction. He concludes his well-known work with these words :

Importance of Din-i-Ilahi.

"Badāoni certainly takes every opportunity of raking up the notion of Akbar's apotheosis for the purpose of renewing attacks upon the great emperor. He however was never in intimate relation to the *Din-i-Ilahi*, he repeats the misconceptions current among the populace marred and alloyed by popular modes of perception. Akbar might justly have contemplated the acts of his reign with legitimate pride, but many incidents of his life prove him to have been among the most modest of men. It was the people who made a God

of the man who was the founder and head of an order at once political, philosophic and religious. One of his creations will assure to him for all time a pre-eminent place among the benefactors of humanity—greatness and universal tolerance in matters of religious belief. If in very deed he had contemplated the deification of himself, a design certainly foreign to his character, these words of Voltaire would serve as his vindication : " Cést le privilège du vrai génie et surtout du génie qui ouvre une carriére, de faire impunément de grandes fautes."[36]

Akbar and the Jesuits.

It was Akbar's interest in religious matters and his eager desire to know the truth that brought him in contact with the Jesuits. They were invited to take part in the debates at Fatehpur Sikri, and the emperor granted them interviews, treated them with kindness, and showed interest in the Christian doctrine, although Dr. Vincent Smith wrongly asserts that the contribution made to the debates by the missionaries was an important factor which led Akbar to renounce the Muslim religion. Akbar's renunciation of Islam has been discussed before, and it will, therefore, suffice to remind the reader that the Jesuit priests who came to his court with the avowed object of converting him to their faith fell, like all religious fanatics, into the error of supposing that the emperor was really willing to embrace the Christian doctrine. All their correspondence betrays their amazing credulity. Obsessed by religious zeal, they accepted every rumour current at Goa, Delhi or Lahore about the emperor, and gave it wide publicity without trying to ascertain the truth. Three missions were sent from Goa to the imperial court in the hope of persuading the emperor to introduce the Christian religion in his dominions. The first mission started from Goa on November 17, 1579, and reached Fatehpur Sikri

[36] Von Noer, I, p. 348.



Emperor Akbar receiving Jesuit Priests

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after a journey of a little more than six weeks. The leaders of the mission were Father Rudolf Acquaviva and Father Monserrate[37] both of whom were distinguished by enthusiastic devotion to their faith. Akbar treated them with kindness and called them to his palace, where he talked to them with great politeness. When the time came to take leave of their royal host, the Fathers were offered a large quantity of gold and silver, which they refused on the ground that their calling did not allow the acceptance of such gifts. Two or three days later, they presented him with a copy of the Bible in four languages and also portraits of Jesus and Virgin Mary which he received with great reverence. The Fathers were full of proselytising zeal, so much so indeed, that they described the Prophet of Islam as Anti-Christ, and Acquaviva wrote in his letter to the Rector of Goa that ' in honour of this infernal monster they bend the knee, prostrate, lift up their hands, give alms, and do all they do.' They talked much against Islam and denounced its observances, and by their indiscreet utterances aggravated the forces of discontent which, as Dr. Vincent Smith admits, found expression in two formidable rebellions, both of which imperilled the throne and life of Akbar. But in spite of their zeal and vilification of the Prophet in which they indulged to excess at times, they did not accomplish much, and when they asked the emperor to adopt the Christian law, he replied with his habitual courtesy that ' the matter was in the hands of God, who possessed the power to accomplish what they desired, and that for his part there was nothing in the world he desired more.' These polite refusals were interpreted by the Fathers as the emperor's willingness to embrace the Christian doctrine.

37 Monserrate who was a scholar acted as the historian of the mission. His chief work is the *Mongolical, Lagationis Commentarious*, which contains an account of Northern India and the Imperial Court. The work has been translated into English by Mr. Hoyland of the Nagpur College.

Negotiations were opened again in 1590. The emperor sent the following letter to the Fathers of the Society of Goa :—

" In the name of God.

The exalted and invincible Akbar to those that are in God's grace and have tasted of his Holy Spirit and to those that are obedient to the spirit of the Messiah and conduct men to good, I say to you, learned Fathers, whose words are heeded as those of retired from the world, men who have left the pomps and honour of earth ; Fathers who walk by the true way, I would have your reverences know that have knowledge of all the faiths of the world, both of various kinds of heathens and of the Mohammedans, save only that of Jesus Christ which is the faith of God and as such recognised and followed by many. Now in that I feel great inclination to the friendship of the Fathers, I desire that by them I may be taught this faith.

There has recently come to our court and Royal Palace one Dom Leo Grimon, a person of great merit and good discourse, whom I have questioned on sundry matters and who has answered well to the satisfaction of myself and my doctors. He has assured me that there are in India (*scil*-Goa) several Fathers of great prudence and learning, and if this be so your reverences will be able immediately, on receiving my letter to send some of them to my Court with all confidence, so that in disputations with my doctors I may compare their several learning and character, and see the superiority of the Fathers over my doctors, whom we call Qazis, and whom by this means they can teach the truth.

If they will remain in my court, I shall build them such lodging that they may live as nobly as any Father now

in this country, and when they wish to leave I shall let them depart with all honour. You would, therefore, do as I ask, and the more willingly because I beg of you the same, in this letter written at the commencement of the moon of June."

This offer gladdened the hearts of the Fathers who welcomed the opportunity of teaching the emperor the tenets of their faith. A second mission consisting of Fathers Edward Leiton and Christopher de Voga was sent which waited on the emperor at Lahore in 1591. He treated the Fathers with great courtesy, allotted to them quarters in his own palace and started a school in which the sons of nobles and the emperor's sons and grandson (Prince Khusrau) were taught to read and write the Portuguese language. But a few days' stay convinced them that the emperor had no intention to embrace the Christian faith. Dr. Vincent Smith says that Akbar was never perfectly sincere when he used expressions implying belief in the Christian religion, but he does not blame the Fathers for their childlike simplicity in mistaking the emperor's latitudinarianism for a desire to change the faith. The Fathers ought to have known by this time that his expanding soul could not be confined within the strait waistcoat of a formula, nor could his eager and inquisitive mind, longing to know the truth, find satisfaction in the narrow sectarianism of the Jesuits. The emperor's interest in Christianity was merely intellectual, but the Fathers were obtuse enough to think that he seriously thought of declaring himself a follower of Christ. Their credulity is revealed in their readiness to accept the orthodox gossip that was current in Hindustan about the emperor. The following is an instance :

" The emperor turned all the mosques of the city where he lived into stables for elephants or horses on the pretence of preparation for war. Soon, however, he destroyed the

Alcorans which are the turrets from which the priests call with loud voices on Mohammed saying that if the mosque could no longer be used for prayer there was no need for the turrets, and this he did in his hatred for the Mohammedan sect and in his affection for the Gospel. The sub-deacon also said that the name of Mohammed was as hated at the Mughal's court as in Christendom, and that the emperor had restricted himself to one wife, turning out the rest and distributing them among his courtiers. Moreover, that he had passed a law that no Mohammedan was to circumcise his son before the fifteenth year of his age, and that the sons should be at liberty on attaining years of discretion to embrace what religion they chose."

It will be clear from the above extract that the Jesuit records are full of half truths and untruths, and yet Dr. Vincent Smith looked upon them as unimpeachable sources of information, and by placing too much reliance upon them gave to the world a highly distorted picture of the greatest Mughal emperor of Hindustan.

After some time the Fathers were called back, and the mission abruptly came to an end.

In 1574 the emperor sent another ambassador to Goa to ask the Provincial to send a fresh mission to instruct him in the doctrines of the Christian faith. The Provincial who knew the fate of the first two missions did not feel inclined to comply with the request, but after consultation with his colleagues agreed to do so. The leader of the new mission was Jerome Xavier, grand-nephew of St. Francis Xavier, and he was assisted by others. The Fathers found the emperor at Lahore in May, 1595. They were hospitably received, and the emperor treated them with a consideration which he did not even show to ruling chiefs. But like their predecessors, they also made

the mistake of supposing that the emperor intended to accept the Christian faith, when they beheld him doing reverence to Christ and Virgin Mary and attending a litany service on bended knees, and with clasped hands after the fashion of the Christians. They were soon disillusioned; and Father Xavier who was greatly disappointed wrote of him that he was drifting hither and thither, like a ship without a rudder not knowing what haven to make for! He listened to discourses on the Christian faith, but showed no sign of abandoning his worship of the sun, which he adored every day at sunrise, and an image of which he constantly kept near him. He allowed the Fathers to build a church and to baptise all who desired to embrace Christianity of their own free-will, but when they asked him to publish broadcast this permission, he replied that it was unnecessary to do so. The idea of conversion was not liked by the people of Hindustan and the Fathers soon despaired of securing a large number of converts.

The members of the third mission also dwell upon the emperor's hostility to Islam, and their remarks have an echo of Badāoni's diatribes against him.

One of them writes :—

> "This king has destroyed the false sect of Muhammad and wholly discredited it. In this city there is neither a mosque nor a Quran, the book of their law, and the mosques that were there have been made stables for horses and store-houses and for the greater shame of the Mohammedans, every Friday it is arranged that forty or fifty boars are brought to fight before the king, and he takes their tusks and has them mounted in gold. This king has made a sect of his own, and makes himself out to be a prophet. He has already many people who follow him, but it is all for money which he gives them. He adores God, and the

sun, and is a Hindu (Gentile); he follows the sect of the Jains (Verrei)."[38]

No contemporary Muslim writer corroborates this account except Badāoni who was avowedly hostile to the emperor. It appears the Fathers heard from certain Muslims about these matters and accepted their statements without a critical examination. They fitted in so well with their hatred towards Islam that they readily put implicit faith in all the reports that reached them about the emperor's alleged apostasy.

Personality of Akbar.

'Akbar is one of the most remarkable kings not only in the history of India but of the whole world. His great qualities are amply revealed in the pages of the *Ain-i-Akbari* and the *Akbarnāmah*, and even Badāoni's hostile pen has not succeeded in belittling the grandeur of his personality. Abul Fazl's account of the emperor's character and habits is very largely confirmed by Father Monserrate who was personally acquainted with him. Jahangir also describes his father in the *Memoirs*, and his remarks deserve to be quoted. He writes:

> "In his august personal appearance he was of middle height, but inclining to be tall; he was of the hue of wheat; his eyes and eyebrows black and his com-

38 Compare with the above Badāoni's calculated misrepresentation of what the emperor did. He says: "The real object of those who became disciples was to get into office, and though His Majesty did everything to get this out of their heads, he acted very differently in the case of Hindus, of whom he could not get enough, for the Hindus, of course, are indispensable; to them belongs half the army and half the land. Neither the Hindustanis nor the Mughals can point to such grand lords as the Hindus have among themselves. But if other than Hindus came and wished to become disciples at any sacrifice His Majesty reproved or punished them. For their honour and zeal he did not care, nor did he notice whether they fell in with his views or not." Comment upon this is superfluous. The reader may be left to draw his own inference.

plexion rather dark than fair; he was lion-bodied, with a broad chest, and hands and arms long. On the left side of his nose he had a fleshly mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea. Those skilled in the science of physiognomy considered the mole a sign of great prosperity and exceeding good fortune. His august voice was very loud and in speaking and explaining had a peculiar richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the glory of God manifested itself in him.

"The good qualities of my revered father are beyond the limit of approval and the bounds of praise. If books were composed with regard to his commendable dispositions, without suspicion of extravagance, and he be not looked at as a father would be by his son even then but a little out of much could be said."[39]

The emperor's features were so majestic and impressive that one could easily recognise at the first glance that he was a king. His shoulders were broad, and his legs were somewhat turned inwards and full-suited for exercises in horsemanship. His forehead was broad and open, and his eyes so bright and flashing that they looked like the sea shining in the light of the sun. His nose was straight and small, and his nostrils were widely open. He was clean-shaven except for a moustache which he wore after the fashion of the Turkish youths who had not yet attained to manhood. He was neither too stout nor too thin, and possessed a healthy and robust constitution. His countenance was highly dignified, and the Jesuit writer who saw him in his 38th year writes that his expression was tranquil, serene and open and full of dignity and, in moments of anger, of awful majesty. He

39 Rogers and Beveridge, I, pp. 33, 34, 37.

laughed heartily, cracked jokes and enjoyed every kind of entertainment, but when he was offended, his wrath was terrible. He was amiable, polite and accessible as few other monarchs in Muslim history have been. He granted audiences to the nobles and the common people alike and spoke gently to them. His manners were highly pleasant, so much so indeed, that Father Jerome Xavier writes of him that 'in truth he was great with the great and lowly with the lowly.' His subjects felt a great attachment towards him in spite of his heterodox views, and the Jesuit writer is surprised that he was not assassinated for his aberrations from orthodoxy. He was extremely intelligent, far-sighted and shrewd and was capable of understanding the most difficult problems of the state without much effort. No question, philosophical or political, could baffle his intellect and the most astute statesmen in the realm found in him a rival in quickness of perception, industry and capacity for ready decision. He could manage a theological debate, a military campaign in a far-off province, and a reform in some branch of the administration with equal ease, and his highest officers always valued his advice and suggestions.

In his dress he followed the fashion of Muslim kings. His garments were made of silk beautifully embroidered in gold. He was fond of Jewellery and wore a great deal of it on ceremonial occasions. His headgear was a turban, tightly bound and decked with pearls and jewels. He liked European dress too and sometimes put it on in private. He always carried arms on his person, and was surrounded even in his private apartments by armed bodyguards.

The imperial kitchen was a huge establishment, but the emperor was extremely temperate in matters of eating and drinking. He took only one meal a day, and left off before he was fully satisfied. No hours were fixed for his meals; they were served whenever he called for them. He was so

gentle and unassuming that the words 'what dinner has been prepared today,' never passed from his lips. But his table was sumptuous, and great precautions were taken against poisoning. He gave up beef, garlic and onions in order to avoid giving offence to his Hindu wives and friends. He cared little for meat, and in his later years completely gave it up. On the question of meat he expressed himself in these words :

"Men are so accustomed to eating meat that were it not for the pain, they would undoubtedly fall to on themselves. Would that my body were so vigorous as to be of service to eaters of meat who would thus forego other animal life, or that as I cut off a piece for their nourishment, it might be replaced by another.

"Would that it were lawful to eat an elephant, so that one animal might avail for many. Were it not for the thought of the difficulty of sustenance, I would prohibit men from eating meat. The reason why I do not altogether abandon it myself is, that many others might willingly forego it likewise and be thus cast into despondency.

"From my earliest years, whenever I ordered animal food to be cooked for me, I found it rather tasteless and cared little for it. I took this feeling to indicate a necessity for protecting animals, and I refrained from animal food.

"Butchers, fishermen and the like who have no other occupation but taking life, should have a separate quarter and their association with others should be prohibited by fine.

"It is indeed from ignorance and cruelty that although various kinds of food are obtainable, men are bent upon injuring living creatures and lending a ready hand in killing and eating them; none seems to have

an eye for the beauty inherent in the prevention of cruelty, but makes himself a tomb for animals."

He drank much in his early youth but in later years he rarely did so. The Jesuit writer says that he quenched his thirst with *post* or plain water. He generally dined alone, reclining on an ordinary couch which was covered with silk and cushions stuffed with the soft fibres of some imported plant.

He was a man of deep affections. He enjoined obedience to parents, and regretted that his father Humayun died so early that he could render him no faithful service. Towards his mother and other relatives, he showed a great kindness and looked after their comforts. He treated his brother Hakīm kindly even when the latter rebelled against him, and showed favour to his foster-brother Aziz Koka, whom he entrusted with important military commands. He loved little children, and used to say that love towards them often turned the mind towards the Bountiful Creator. He had a great love for Bibi Daulat-Shād's daughter whom he gave the name of Aram Banu Begum. Often he said to his son Salim: "Baba! for my sake be as kind as I am, after me, to this sister, who in Hindi phrase is 'my darling.'" He hated pride and arrogance and behaved as the humblest of men. When he organised his religious order, many expressed a wish to become his disciples but he refused to admit them and said: 'Why should I claim to guide men, before I myself am guided.'[40] Jahangir writes in his *Memoirs* that notwithstanding his kingship and boundless wealth he never 'placed his foot beyond the base of humility before the throne of God but considered himself the lowest of created beings and never for one moment forgot God.'[41]

[40] Ain, I, p. 165.

[41] Rogers and Beveridge, I, p. 37.

His time was carefully mapped out so that not a minute was wasted. He slept only for a few hours in the night, and spent most of his time in philosophical discussions and listening to historians who related the events of bygone ages 'without adding or suppressing facts.' After daybreak, peasants, soldiers, tradesmen, merchants and men of other avocations gathered near the walls of the palace and were allowed to make the *kornish*. During the day the emperor was busy in transacting the business of the state. He himself looked into every detail of the administration which was greatly improved by his methodising genius.

Though himself not highly educated, the emperor was endowed by nature with extraordinary intellectual powers. He had a marvellous memory which enabled him to store his mind with all kinds of useful knowledge. He knew a great deal of philosophy, theology, history and politics and could easily give his opinion on the most abstruse subjects. Never before in the history of Muslim rule in India had so many scholars, poets and philosophers gathered round a king and enjoyed his patronage. He had a large library in his palace which contained books on all subjects. Learned men were asked to read these books to the emperor from the beginning to the end. He made a sign with his own pen every day at the place where his readers stopped and paid their wages according to the number of pages read. Thus he had acquired a sufficiently wide knowledge of Asiatic literature which included a deep study of Sufi poets. He had heard the Gospel from the lips of the Jesuit Fathers and seems to have greatly liked its teachings. His interest in art was keen; he loved calligraphy and employed a large number of skilled calligraphists in his service. He was fond of music and song, and a large number of musicians lived at his court. He was not devoid of a knowledge of architecture, and the buildings of his reign testify to his good taste. It is really a marvel that he

should have drawn in so much knowledge through the ear. Even Dr. Vincent Smith who is in no way partial to him acknowledges his great intellectual powers. He says:

> "Anybody who heard him arguing with acuteness and lucidity on a subject of debate would have credited him with wide literary knowledge and profound erudition, and never would have suspected him of illiteracy."[42] He knew the mechanical art and himself devised several guns.

He was possessed of incredible bodily strength. The Mongol and Turkish elements were mixed up in his nature, and he displayed the qualities of both races. He was devoted from his childhood to hunting excursions, and when he grew to man's estate, they became a passion with him. Sport was a source of delight to him, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than the chase of wild and ferocious animals. No lion, tiger or elephant, however fierce, could frighten him, and no amount of fatigue could make him give up the pursuit of his game. Fear was unknown to his nature, and whether he was in the thick of battle or in the breathless chase of some wild animal, he dashed with full vigour, and never faltered or hesitated. He enjoyed elephant fights and gladiatorial combats, but had an abhorrence of bloodshed. He was at times so reckless of his own life that he plunged his horse into the Ganges, when it was in full flood during the rainy season, and successfully crossed to the other side.

The emperor held a lofty ideal of kingship. Ever devoted to the service of God and the quest of truth, he had a real affection for his people and a genuine desire to establish a just and efficient government. He exerted himself to the utmost to promote this end. His ideal of kingly duty is well reflected in his sayings:

[42] Akbar. p. 338.

"A monarch is a pre-eminent cause of God. Upon his conduct depends the efficiency of any course of action. His gratitude to his Lord, therefore, should be shown in just government and due recognition of merit; that of his people in obedience and praise."

"Tyranny is unlawful in every one, especially in a sovereign who is the guardian of the world."

"Falsehood is improper in all men and most unseemly in monarchs. This order is termed the shadow of God, and a shadow should throw straight."

Dr. Vincent Smith, relying upon Jesuit sources, dwells at length upon Akbar's artfulness and duplicity in statecraft and speaks of his 'tortuous diplomacy and perfidious action.' But we feel much relieved to read in his work a little later that a certain amount of finesse is inevitable in diplomacy and politics, and that his policy was not more tortuous than that of the European princes of his time. The same learned historian goes on to add that in all countries it is necessary for statesmen to practise an economy of truth, but the sense of racial superiority gets the better of his judicial fairness, and leads him to say that it would not be reasonable to expect an Asiatic potentate like Akbar to be in advance of his European contemporaries in respect of straight dealing. Dr. Vincent Smith forgets that Akbar's great contemporary Elizabeth lied shamelessly, and Green goes so far as to assert that in the profusion and recklessness of her lies she stood without a peer in Christendom. The vile methods and intrigues of other monarchs in France, Spain and elsewhere are too well known to need mention. Akbar was undoubtedly superior to his contemporaries both in intellect and character, and his policy was far more humane than theirs. Against the few acts of inhumanity and breach of faith attributed to him by Dr. Smith,

it is possible to mention a hundred deeds of generosity and benevolence. Accurate and impartial research by whomsoever conducted will reveal Akbar to have been in many respects a greater man than his European contemporaries.

The greatest title of Akbar to fame is his policy of religious toleration. He was tolerant of other faiths. No doctrinal dissent could drive him into fury nor could differences of opinion make him lose his temper or disturb the natural serenity of his philosophical mind. He allowed Fathullah Shirazi who was a Shia to say his prayers in the hall of audience and connived at his practices, because he thought it good to encourage a man of talent. On the Śivarātri day he held a meeting of Hindu ascetics and ate and drank with them. In the matter of worship he allowed the utmost freedom to non-Muslims. He never countenanced forcible conversions. On the other hand, if a Hindu had been converted to Islam by force in his childhood, he was allowed, if he liked, to go back to the religion of his fathers. There was a standing ordinance of the emperor to the effect that no man should be interfered with on account of his religion, and everyone should be free to settle his own convictions. Another decree laid down that if the infidels built a church or a synagogue or an idol temple or a fire temple, no one should molest them. Himself a man of catholic views, he associated with the learned of all races and religions and comprehended fully the meaning of their subtle doctrines. Abul Fazl tells us that though occasionally he joined public worship in order to hush the slandering tongues of the bigots of the age, his ardent feeling for God and his desire to know the truth led him to practise great inward and outward austerities. This intimate contact with the learned of the age developed his understanding and sharpened his intelligence to such an extent that nobody could believe that he was uneducated. He fully realised the weakness of human nature and used to say :

"It is my duty to be in good understanding with all men. If they walk in the way of God's will interference with them would be in itself reprehensible ; and if otherwise, they are under the malady of ignorance and deserve my compassion."

He was sincerely religious and devoted to God, so much so indeed, that Abul Fazl writes that he 'passed every moment of his life in self-examination or in adoration of God.' Dr. Vincent Smith greatly underrates Akbar's attempt to organise a religious order with a view to unite his subjects of diverse races and creeds. One wishes that the distinguished historian had paid a just tribute to his genius for proclaiming the *Sulh-i-kul* (universal peace) at a time when in Europe the principle enforced was *cujus regio ejus religio*. From the Diet of Augsburg, which met a year before the imperial accession to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, Europe knew no peace, and the religion of the subjects was regulated by the state. The dissenter could only choose between submission to the dictation of the civil ruler or emigration from his territorial bounds. Even in Dr. Smith's own country during the reign of Elizabeth Protestantism was imposed by force upon the Irish people. Philip II of Spain who was a bigoted Papist openly declared that it was better not to rule at all than to rule over heretics. A comparison of European monarchs with Akbar easily establishes the superiority of the latter both in genius and achievement, and there is no warrant for the disparaging remarks which Dr. Vincent Smith makes under the cloak of judicial impartiality. In sheer mental power Akbar was undoubtedly the peer of Cæsar and Cromwell. All things considered, he will rank among the greatest kings of history, and his claim to this pre-eminent position will always rest upon his grand and original intellect, force of character and the solid results of his statesmanship.

Nature of Mughal Government.

The Mughal system of administration was not original The methods followed all over the Muslim world were those of the Abbasid Khalifās of Iraq or the Fatimid Khalifās of Egypt. But when the early Turks came to India, their ideas became interfused with the customs and usages of the country. The Hindus continued to be employed in the revenue department, and their customs and practices exercisd a powerful influence on administrative arrangements. The Mughal administration was therefore a mixture of Indian and foreign elements, and, to use Professor Sarkar's expressive phrase, it was 'Perso-Arabic system in Indian setting.' Its elaborate organization entailed much record-keeping, and required the monarch to be constantly vigilant. But it was not wholly based on force. There was partial acquiescence of the people, because the new government was more humane, tolerant and beneficent. It respected social usages and allowed the villages to enjoy their time-honoured right of self-government.

The King.

The head of the administration was the king himself. In theory he had unlimited powers, but in practice he always deferred to the wishes of those who were near him or who were affected by his decrees. Even the most absolute monarch has to consult the wishes of the clique that supports him. Akbar was an autocrat but his autocracy did not imply irresponsibility. His methods differed from those of the rulers of the pre-Mughal days. At a very early age he was complete master of his kingdom, and announced a policy which was based upon liberal and humanitarian principles. The disabilities imposed upon the unbelievers were removed, and the administration treated the Hindus and Muslims alike in all matters. There was no exclusion from the offices of the state on religious grounds, and the Hindus were granted complete liberty of worship. The principle of religious toleration guided the policy of Akbar

and augmented the glory of his empire. Some of his ablest ministers and most trusted friends were Hindus, and he always consulted them before taking action in important matters.

Never during his reign did he levy extra taxes, although his perpetual wars implied a heavy strain on his resources. It is true he tried to repress the bigotry of the 'Ulama but he did so in order to end their interference in political affairs. Much of the careful organisation which he effected to govern his vast empire was the outcome of his own genius. He was often, as Dr. Vincent Smith says, the teacher rather than the pupil of his ministers. His bureaucracy, half-civil, half-military, admirably served his purpose, and administrative efficiency reached its high water-mark for the first time under Mohammadan rule. The emperor himself was the guiding spirit of all reforms and policies, and it was his master-mind which grasped the minutest details of government, and made possible the smooth working of the whole machinery. Below the king the *Vakil* was the principal executive officer. He was, as it were, the *alter ego* of the emperor and was consulted in all matters. This office was in the early years held by Bairam Khan, the tutor and guardian of the emperor.[43]

Organisation of Civil Government.

The chief departments of the Mughal government were :—

(1) Finance (under the *Diwan*).

(2) The military, Pay and Accounts office (under the *Mir Bakhshi*).

(3) The Imperial Household (under the *Khan-i-Sāmān* or Lord High Steward).

43 There were no departments like those of the British Government in those days. This is only a rough classification to assist clear understanding. It would be proper to name the powerful officers of the administration and to detail the duties assigned to them.

(4) Judicial (under the chief *Qazi* known as the *Qazi-ul-Quzāt*).

(5) Religious endowments and charitable grants (under the *Sadr-i-Sudūr*).

(6) Censorship of Public Morals (under the *Muhatsib*). Somewhat inferior to these were the following :—

(7) Artillery (under the *Mir Ātish* or *Daroghā-i-Topkhānah*).

(8) Intelligence and Posts (under the *Daroghā-i-Dāk Chowki*).

(9) Mint (under its own *Daroghā*).

The Wazir or Diwan.

Abul Fazl describes the *Diwan* as the emperor's lieutenant in all financial matters, who superintended the imperial treasuries and checked all accounts. He was the head of the revenue department, and all questions pertaining to the assessment and collection of revenue were decided by him. All revenue papers, returns and despatches from the different parts of the empire were received in his office, and all orders for payment except those regarding petty sums of money were made by him. The *Wazir* was like other officers a *mansabdar*, i.e., holder of a military rank in the army, and sometimes did actually command armies, though usually he had to remain at the capital by reason of the peculiar nature of his business.

The Bakhshi or Paymaster.

There was no clear division between the civil and military branches of the administration. Every civil officer was a *mansabdar* in the imperial army, and his *mansab* determined his salary and position in the official hierarchy. The salary bills of all officers had to be scrutinised and passed by the paymaster of the army. He assigned posts to several commanders in the van, centre wings and rear guards before battle. The *Ain*

defines the *Mir Bakhshi* as an officer in charge of the personal army of the emperor. He exercised a general control over the whole army, and saw that the *mansabdars* kept their horses in the proper condition. He looked after the recruitment of soldiers also.

He was the head of the emperor's household establishment and accompanied him during his journeys and campaigns.

The Khan-i-Sāmān or Lord High Steward.

Blochmann translates him as Superintendent of Stores. He was the head of the emperor's personal staff, and managed his food, tents and stores, and looked after his messing arrangements. According to Manucci he was in charge of the entire expenditure of the royal household in reference to both great and small things. The office of the *Khan-i-Sāmān* was an important one, and only men of trust were appointed to it.

He was the highest judicial officer of the realm corresponding to the Lord Chief Justice of England. The emperor as the

The Chief Qazi.

Khalifā of the age was the supreme judge in all cases, but generally he acted as the highest court of appeal. The Qazi was the Chief Judge in criminal cases which he decided according to Muslim Law.

This is a very old office. It had existed in the time of the Khiljis and Tughluqs. In old times the state was the custodian

The Muhatsib.

of men's life and property as well as their morals. The *Muhatsib's* duties were to see that the people led their lives in accordance with the law of the Prophet to put down the practices condemned in the *Shariat*, and in general to prevent immorality.

Besides these there were many other officers who held responsible positions in the state. Some of these are :—

(1) The Mustaufi ... Auditor-General.

(2) The Awārjah Nawīs Superintendent of daily expenditure at the court.

(3) The Nāzir-i-Būyutāt[44]		Superintendent of the Imperial Workshop.
(4) The Mushrif	...	Revenue Secretary.
(5) Mir Bahri	...	Chief Admiral and Officer of the Harbours.
(6) Mir Barr	...	Superintendent of Forests.
(7) Qūr Begi	...	Superintendent of the Royal Stud.
(8) Akht Begi	...	Superintendent of the Royal Stud.
(9) Khwān Sālar	...	Superintendent of the Royal Kitchen.
(10) The Waqā-i-Nawīs	...	The News-recorder.
(11) Mir 'Arz	...	Officer who presented all petitions to the emperor brought by suitors who wished to place them before His Majesty. At one time Mirza Abdur Rahim was appointed as the principal *Mir Arz* of the realm.

The officer who was responsible for maintaining peace in the cities was the *Kotwal*. His duties are enumerated at length in the *Ain*,[45] the most important of which are :—

(1) to keep watch at night and patrol the city ;

[44] Būyutāt is derived from the Arabic word *bait* meaning 'house.' This officer looked after the workshops and also registered the property of deceased persons in order to clear their accounts with the state.

[45] Jarrett, II, pp. 41—43.

(2) to keep a register of houses and frequented roads ;

(3) to employ a spy from among the obscure residents and to observe the income and expenditure of the various classes ;

(4) to discover thieves ;

(5) to examine weights and measures ;

(6) to make a list of the property of those who have no heir and of deceased and missing persons.

(7) not to allow a woman to be burnt against her will and to prevent circumcision below the age of 12.

There are many other duties assigned to the Kotwal. Indeed the catalogue is so long that Professor Jadunath Sarkar is inclined to think that the passage in the *Ain* represents an ideal rather than an actual state of things. The Kotwal is still a familiar figure in big cities in Northern India, and he still performs most of the duties entrusted to his Mughal prototype. It was the Kotwal's duty in Akbar's day to prevent and detect crime, to trace the whereabouts of offenders and to look after the daily life of the people in the town. He was to discover stolen goods, and if he failed to do so, he had to make good the loss. He had to patrol at night to note the movements of strangers, to set the idle to work and to fix the places of men following different occupations in the town such as butchers, washermen, etc. This made the Kotwal usually alert, and he became a terror to all vagabonds and tramps who roamed about without any ostensible means of subsistence. Espionage is an inevitable corrollary of despotism, and the Kotwal employed spies to obtain information about the doings of the people in the city. Bribery was prevalent, but the dread of the emperor exercised a wholesome restraint, and in many cases the Kotwals discharged their duties with rigorous efficiency. Order and security prevailed in cities. Business was safe, and

foreign merchants were well protected. The office of Kotwal existed throughout the Mughal rule, and Manucci has described its duties from personal observation.[46]

Justice and Law.

The emperor was the fountain of all justice. He was the highest court of appeal, and the people had boundless confidence in his justice. He heard original suits of a certain kind as well as appeals sent for disposal by provincial governments. On a fixed day all people, the high and low, were permitted to enter the Court of Justice and lay their complaints before him. Even when His Majesty was on tour, he held his court regularly and received complaints against his officials also. The *Mir 'Arz* had to be present at the palace all day and night, and at one time seven *Mir 'Arzes* were appointed with Abdur Rahim as the Head *Mir 'Arz,* because one man could not cope with the increased volume of work.

Below the emperor was the *Sadr-i-Sudūr* who decided important civil cases especially of a religious character. The *Qazi-ul-quzāt* was the highest judicial officer in the realm, who was responsible for the efficient administration of justice. There were no law courts in those days with definite codes of law to guide the presiding officers. The functionaries who were mainly concerned with the disposal of cases were—(1) the *Qazi,* (2) the *Mufti,* and (3) the *Miradl.* The *Mufti* expounded the law ; the *Qazi* investigated the evidence ; and the *Miradl* delivered the judgment. The *Miradl* was specially enjoined to look after the general interest of the state and to act as a counterpoise to the *Qazi's* influence. There were no professional lawyers, trained in law and conversant with social usages and regulations of the state, and since the parties had to plead their cause in person, we may presume that justice was not always done to the simple villager who was helpless

46 Storia do Mogor, II, pp. 420-21.

against a rapacious official or an influential opponent. The number of *Miradls* in Akbar's time was not very large. They were generally associated with the *Qazis* who were more conservative in their outlook and unresponsive to the larger considerations of public welfare. At one time the emperor dismissed all reactionary *Qazis*, not to destroy the Muslim law as is too readily assumed by his orthodox critics, but to induce a chastened mood in judges who considered themselves infallible.

The *Qazi's* court had civil and criminal jurisdiction and tried cases of both Hindus and Muslims. But in deciding those cases in which the parties were Hindus, he was required to take into consideration the customs and usages of the Hindu community. It does not appear that he was supplied with any official agency to explain the Hindu customs, but there is evidence to show that such usages were respected by government. The *Qazi* was expected to be just, honest and impartial and to hold trials in the presence of parties at the seat of the court-house and not in any private place. He was ordered not to accept presents or to attend entertainments given by all and sundry, and was asked to be proud of his poverty. But these injunctions were more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Most of the *Qazis* were haughty and corrupt and gave perverse verdicts.

There was no written code of law which the judges had to administer in Akbar's empire. The *Quran* was the ultimate authority to which all questions had to be referred. But the Quran could not be applied to all conceivable cases, and therefore its provisions were supplemented by the *Hadis* or sayings of the Prophet. The *Fatwas* or decrees of eminent judges or the *'Ulama* constituted another source of law, but they were not binding upon the *Qazi*, who might or might not accept them. The criminal law was the same for all, and in the matter of punishment no distinctions were made on religious grounds. In

civil cases in which the parties were Hindus full regard was paid to their customary and traditional law, and the *Qazi* was expected to acquaint himself with Hindu usages. The courts had to follow the regulations laid down by the emperor in revenue cases. But the emperor was above the law. He could freely annul or reverse the decisions of his judges who were always careful to avoid the imperial displeasure.

The punishments inflicted by courts were often severe. Amputation of limbs was permitted, but capital punishment could not be inflicted without the emperor's sanction. There was no regular jail system, and long-term prisoners were confined in forts. Those who were guilty of particularly heinous offences were thrown into dungeons, and were treated with great rigour. Fines were not unknown, and in certain cases exhorbitant demands were made to meet the ends of justice.

Father Monserrate's account of the King's justice is well worth quoting. Here is a summary of his observations :—

The King's regard for right and justice in the affairs of government is remarkable. He takes a very strong view of errors and misdemeanours committed by his officials in discharging their duties. He is sincerely anxious that guilt should be punished without malice indeed but without undue leniency. All important cases he decided himself, and punishments were awarded ofter great deliberation. Moral offences were severely dealt with. Seducers and adulterers were either strangled or gibbeted. He had such a hatred of debauchery and adultery that neither influences nor entreaties, nor the great ransom which was offered would induce him to pardon his chief trade commissioner, who had outraged the modesty of an unmarried girl. The wretch was remorselessly strangled. The chief executioner was provided with many barbarous instruments to inflict punishments upon malefactors, but no one was actually punished with them, and they seemed to be intended rather to inspire terror than for actual use.

It may be said that under Akbar some of the worst features of despotism were minimised. It is the curse of despotism that the claims of men of merit are always ignored or neglected. But the guiding maxim of Akbar's .government like that of Napoleon Bonaparte in France was 'career open to talent.' Able men from distant countries of Asia came to India in search of employment, and found shelter at his court. All those who entitled to be called great or noble in the country were in the sevice of the emperor. There was no rank or dignity outside the pale of the imperial sevice. Appointment to every post rested with the emperor. His will was law. He could elevate a man to the highest position straightway without requiring him to serve in the lower ranks or degrade a man from the highest office as he did in the case of Shaikh Abdunnabi. As to qualifications there was no hard and fast rule. There was no specialisation in the various branches of the administration, and the modern device of testing a candidate's fitness for public service by competitive examinations was altogether unknown. The emperor's judgment was the sole guide. Aliens were admitted in the service, and in Akbar's time their number considerably increased. Nearly seventy per cent of the officers were foreigners, descendants of families, that had come to India with Humayun or afterwards, and only thirty per cent of them were Indians proper. There was no ban on the Hindus. Many of them entered the imperial service, and the revenue department was largely manned by them. The higher posts were open only to the Rajputs, the only exceptions being Todarmal, Birbal and their sons. Officers were not confined to duties of one kind only. They were transferred by the emperor to perform duties which were diametrically opposite to the duties of the office which they actually held. Raja Birbal, a court wit, was sent by the emperor to command an expedition against the Yusufzais

The imperial Service.

with fatal results. Abul Fazl who was a literary man *par excellence* was sent to the Deccan against Bahadur of Khandesh, and Raja Todarmal was deputed to deal with the insurgents in Bengal and Bihar. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan won his early spurs in Gujarat as a warrior. It seems all offices were interchangeable. There were no rules of promotion or pension. Everything depended upon the emperor's sweet will. Once a man joined the service, he was sure of a rise and was rapidly promoted from grade to grade, sometimes at once from the lowest to the highest. The highest ambition of every aspiring youth, Hindu or Muslim, was to get an opportunity of serving the state, because it meant honour, prestige, and high emoluments, and to men of talent like Raja Todarmal it afforded ample scope for the exercise of their special genius. But there was one serious disability under which all officers of the state laboured. They could eat, drink and be merry and amass large fortunes during their lifetime, but they could not transmit their accumulated hoards to their children after death. Almost inevitably, the son of a noble had to begin life anew, for the property of his parent lapsed to the state by the law of escheat. Under such circumstances the Mughal grandees lived luxurious and wasteful lives, and lavishly spent money in giving bribes to secure the emperor's favour. As Mr. Moreland rightly observes, money saved was money lost unless it could be concealed from the knowledge of the world. Corruption was rife, and other qualities than honesty were needed to ensure advancement in life. These were readiness of speech, capacity for ingratiating one's self with the clique or coterie that was in power at court. All these circumstances prevented the rise of an independent hereditary aristocracy, which serves as a check on autocracy. The hope that the law of escheat would finally lead to the survival of the fittest proved chimerical, and the mighty Muslim nobility, deprived of its patrimony, became selfish, unscrupulous and mediocre.

There was no provincial administration in the Mughal sense before Akbar. Under Sher Shah the whole country was divided into *Sarkars* and *Parganas* with their own officers of which an account has been given in a previous chapter. With Humayun's restoration a fresh arrangement became necessary. He parcelled out the whole country among his generals, but the system did not work well in practice and the fiefholders increased their lands and made attempts to shake off the imperial yoke. Akbar abolished the system of *jagirs* and divided the whole empire into twelve *Subahs*. Later when Ahmadnagar was conquered, three more *Subahs* were added thus raising the total to fifteen.[47] The *Subah* was a replica of the empire in every respect, and the *Subahadar* who was officially styled as the *Sipahsālār* enjoyed unlimited powers, while he remained in office. Often in the provinces, away from the capital he behaved for all practical purposes like a miniature king. The *Subahs* were further divided into *sarkars* and *parganas*, but the former seem to have been fiscal and not administrative units. The officers of the *sarkar* are not mentioned in the *Ain*, and from the manner in which Abul Fazl speaks of the *Sarkar* we may reasonably conclude that it

Provincial Administration.

[47] The *Subhas* comprised in the empire were—

1. Agra	2. Ilābās or Allahabad		3. Oudh
4. Delhi	5. Lahore	6. Multan	7. Kabul
8. Ajmer	9. Bengal	10. Bihar	11. Ahmadabad
12. Malwa	13. Berar	14. Khandesh	15. Ahmadnagar

The last three were added after the Deccan conquest.

was an aggregation of *parganas* having similar customs and usages for revenue purposes. The *Sipahsālār* was the head of the Provincial administration and exercised civil and military jurisdiction. He was usually a favourite of the emperor who had risen to high rank by reason of his meritorious services to the state. Age did not matter, for Aziz Koka and Abdur Rahim were elevated to gubernatorial positions when they were quite young. The *Sipahsālār* was the emperor's representative in the *Subah*, and the Persian writers described his position by employing a significant metaphor. They said that just as the moon derives its light from the sun so did the provincial governor derive his authority from the emperor. He held his own court, but he could not sit in the *jarokha* or declare war or peace without the emperor's permission. He was the head of the judicial and military departments. He heard appeals from the decisions of the *Qazis* and *Miradls*. As the highest military officer in the province, he commanded the provincial forces, and was responsible for their maintenance and proper equipment. He could appoint and dismiss all his staff except the officers in the higher grades. He was not allowed to interfere in religious matters, and if there was any religious question requiring settlement, it was referred to the Sadr or other officers. Though head of the judiciary, he could not inflict capital punishment without the emperor's sanction. He kept a large number of spies who supplied him with information of all kinds about the people within his jurisdiction.

Below him were (1) the *Diwan*, (2) the *Sadr*, (3) the *Āmil* or revenue collector, (4) the *Bitikchi*, (5) the *Potdar* or *Khizandar*, (6) the *Faujdar*, (7) the *Kotwal*, (8) the *Waqa-i-nawīs*, and (9) other officers of the revenue department like the *Qānūngo* and the *Patwari*.

(1) *Diwan*.—Next in importance is the *Diwan* who was the rival of the *Sipahsālār*. Formerly the provincial *Diwans* were

selected by the governor himself, but in 1579 when the crown lands had greatly increased, the appointments were made by the central government. The *Diwan's* duty was to watch the conduct of the *Sipahsālār* and to co-operate with him in running the administration. He possessed the power of the purse, and all bills of payment were signed by him. He tried all revenue cases except those in which his department was concerned. Where there was a difference of opinion between the *Subahdar* and the *Diwan* the matter was referred to the central government. The *Diwan* acted as a check on the governor and prevented the latter from becoming too powerful.

(2) *Sadr.*—The provincial *Sadr* was appointed by the central government and his chief duty was to govern the *Sayūrghāls*. He was more independent than the *Diwan* in his relations with the *Sipahsālār* and had a separate office of his own. As the *Sadr* was generally a man of piety and learning, and could grant lands and allowances on his own initiative, he was held in great esteem by the people. The *Qazis* and *Miradls* were under him.

(3) The *Āmil* or the revenue collector.—Probably the description of the collector in the *Ain* represents an ideal state of things, but his functions are clearly indicated. The *Āmil* had multifarious duties to discharge. He was asked to deal with the refractory severely, without the least apprehension of the land remaining uncultivated. He was to ascertain the quality of the land actually under cultivation and to reclaim the waste lands. He was also to assist in the maintenance of the general peace by punishing highway robbery and other like crimes, and was to show consideration to peaceful and law-abiding citizens. He was to take security from land surveyors, assessors, and other officers and was to see that in measuring the land not a *bigha* was concealed or overlooked. The revenue was to be collected in an amicable

manner, and the treasurer was not to demand an extra coin from the husbandmen. The *Āmil* was to examine the registers maintained by the *Kārkun*, the *Muqaddam* and the *Patwari* and to report, if any untoward event affecting cultivation happened in his jurisdiction. He was to submit monthly statements regarding the condition of the people, the *jagirdars*, the residents of the neighbourhood, the market prices, the current rates of tenements, etc. He was required to tour in the country and warned not to make his visits an occasion for exacting money or receiving presents from the peasantry.

(4) The *Bitikchi*.—He was of the same status as the *Āmil* and served as a check on him. He supervised the work of the *Qānūngos* and was required to be a good writer and a skilful accountant. He was expected to be fully acquainted with the customs and regulations of the district in his charge and was to keep a record of all engagements entered into by the peasant with the government. It was also his duty to prepare detailed statements of arable and waste land and of income and expenditure. He made revenue abstracts every season and submitted an annual report to the court.

(5) The *Potdar* or *Khizandar*.—He was to receive money from the cultivators and to keep the treasure of the state securely locked. He issued receipts for every payment and kept a ledger to avoid mistakes in accounts. He was ordered not to make any payment without a voucher signed by the *Diwan*.

(6) The *Faujdar*.—As a subordinate and assistant, writes Abul Fazl, the *Faujdar* holds the first place. He was the commander of the provincial forces and assisted the *Subahdar* in maintaining peace and discharging his executive functions. There were several *Faujdars* in a province, who held charge of a number of *parganas*. When the *Āmil* found difficulty in realising the state revenue from a defaulting or refractory

village, the *Faujdar* was to furnish military aid but only on a written requisition. His appointment or dismissal rested with the *Subahdar* whom he was to assist in every way. The *Faujdar's* duties were of a military character and as Prof. J. N. Sarkar writes, " he was the only commander of a military force stationed in the country to put down smaller rebellions, disperse or arrest robber gangs, take cognizance of all violent crimes, and make demonstrations of force to overawe opposition to the revenue authorities or the criminal judge or the censor."

(7) The *Kotwal*.—The *Kotwal's* duties are described at length in the *Ain*. He was essentially a police officer of the towns, but also exercised magisterial authority in certain cases. He was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in cities, and had several assistants under him to secure this end. His important functions have already been mentioned in discussing the central government.

(8) The *Waqa-i-Nawīs* or recorder of occurrences. These were officers through whom the central government kept itself in touch with provincial administration. When the provincial viceroy held his court, this officer recorded the occurrences on the spot, and forwarded his letters to the imperial government. It was through these officers that the emperor kept himself informed of everything that occurred in the provinces. They continued throughout the Mughal period and acquired much importance under Aurangzeb who looked upon them as his eyes and ears. The following advice given to a newly appointed *Waqa-i-Nawīs* will show what his duties were :—

> " Report the truth, lest the emperor should learn the facts from another source and punish you. Your work is delicate ; both sides have to be served. Deep sagacity and consideration should be employed so that both the

Shaikh and the book may remain in their proper places. In the wards of most of the high officers, forbidden things are done. If you report them truly, the officers will be disgraced. If you do not, you yourself will be undone. Therefore, you should tell the Lord of the Ward 'In your ward forbidden things are taking place, stop them.' If he gives a rude reply, you should threaten the Kotwal of the ward by pointing out the misdeed. The lord of the ward will then know of it. Although the evil has not yet been removed from the ward, yet, if any one reports the matter to the Emperor, you can easily defend yourself by saying that you have informed the master of the ward and instructed the Kotwal. In every matter write the truth, but avoid offending the nobles. Write after carefully verifying your statement."

Besides these there were many other officers who carried on the work of administration in the provinces. These were the *Kārkuns*, the *Qānūngos* and the *Patwaris* who were all revenue officers. The *Qānūngo* was a *Pargana* officer acquainted with all rural customs and rights of the peasantry. His pay ranged between 20 and 25 rupees. The parganas were divided into villages, and each village had a *Muqaddam* (headman) and a *Patwari* who kept records of revenue. The *Muqaddam* is an old officer well-known in Indian history. His function was to keep order in the village and to help in the collection of the state dues.

Administration of Justice.

The courts of justice were pretty much the same as at the capital. The *Qazi* assisted by the *Mufti* and the *Miradl* administered justice to the people. The *Subahdar* was the highest court of appeal in the province. When there was a difference of opinion between the judicial officers, the decision of the central government was final. The Kotwal was to bring the

offenders to the court, and trials were to be held promptly. No culprit could be detained in prison for more than one night without a trial. Appeals could be made to the emperor in important cases, but their number could not have been very large.

How did the system work?

The administration was a carefully devised system of checks and counterchecks, but most of these were in practice illusory. The long distances, the absence of means of communication, and the stress of war made it impossible for the emperor to exercise vigilant control over the provincial satraps. They acted on their own responsibility, and though their power was limited in theory, they enjoyed ample discretion. Bribery was common, and offence's gilded hand not infrequently succeeded in stifling justice even in cases where prompt redress was necessary.

Revenue system before Akbar.

The first Muslim ruler, who made a systematic land survey was Sher Shah who laid down the main principles which were followed in the time of Akbar. The state demand was fixed at one-third and regulations were devised for the collection of the revenue, of which an account has already been given. But Sher Shah's régime was too short-lived to put the whole system in working order. Much of the excellent work that had been done by him was upset during the anarchy that followed after his death, and the laws which he had made fell into disuse. When Humayun was restored to the throne, the empire was divided into two parts—the Khalsa or crown land and Jagir land. A large portion of the empire was cut up in jagirs held by his nobles and amirs who paid a stipulated amount to their patron and emperor. The Khalsa land seems to have followed the time-honoured practice of crop division. No difficulty was felt because the empire was rather small, and its problems were of a simple nature.

Akbar's early efforts.

Akbar's accession to the throne marked a new era in the history of administrative reform. Like everything else the revenue department also felt the master's touch. When Khwaja Abdul Majid Khan became *Diwan*, the total revenue was taken after estimate, and the assignments were increased as the caprice of the moment suggested. An attempt was made to fix roughly the revenue of the various *sarkars*, and to ascertain the prices of food-stuffs, but no appreciable success was achieved. More definite steps were taken to settle the revenue, when Muzaffar Turbati became *Diwan* in the 15th year of the reign. With the help of Todarmal he tried to organise the whole system. Ten *Qānūngos* were appointed to collect the data relating to revenue matters and were asked to find out the exact nature of the land tenure. The assessment was to be made on the basis of the estimates furnished by the provincial *Qānūngos*, which were revised and checked by the ten *Qānūngos*, at the imperial headquarters. These labours produced no important results, because the whole scheme was interrupted by the Uzbeg rebellion. When Gujarat was conquered in 1573, Todarmal was sent to bring about a peaceful settlement of the country. He carried out for the first time a regular survey of land, and the assessment was made after taking into consideration the area and quality of land. In 1575 the whole empire was brought under the exchequer with the exception of Bengal and Bihar, and the Jagirs were abolished. The whole area included in the empire at that time was divided into 182 *parganas*, each of which yielded a crore a year as revenue. The officers placed in charge of these *parganas* were called *Crories*. They seem to have been greedy and corrupt officers, and were severely punished for their malversation by Todarmal. It appears that after some time their office was abolished or held in abeyance, for there is no mention of them in the *Ain*. Abul Fazl is silent about

them either because they had ceased to exist at the time when he wrote his work, or because they were corrupt officers, and therefore deserving of contemptuous omission. But they are again mentioned in the time of Jahangir, which shows that they continued to serve in the revenue department.

Todarmal's Reforms.—The *Zabti* system.

The revenue system was thoroughly reorganised, when Todarmal was appointed to the office of *Dīwān-i-Ashraf* in the year 1582. The increased size of the empire made some reform inevitable. Hitherto the practice had been to fix the assessment every year on the basis of yield and prices which made the demand variable from year to year. The collectors could not proceed with their work until the officers at the headquarters had fixed the rates to be demanded from the ryot. To obviate the difficulty and inconvenience caused by the yearly assessment, Todarmal laid down the following principles which Abul Fazl describes in these words:—

"When through the prudent management of the Sovereign the empire was enlarged in extent, it became difficult to ascertain each year the prices current and much inconvenience was caused by the delay. On the one hand, husbandmen complained of excessive exactions, and on the other hand, the holder of assigned lands was aggrieved on account of the revenue balances.

"His Majesty devised a remedy for these evils and in the discernment of his world-adorning mind fixed a settlement for ten years; the people were thus made contented and their gratitude was abundantly manifested. From the beginning of the 15th year of the Divine Era (1570-71) to the 24th (1579-80), an aggregate of the rates of collection was formed and a tenth of the total was fixed as the annual assessment; but from the 20th (1575-76) to the 24th, an aggregate of the rates of collection was formed,

and a tenth of the total was fixed as the annual assessment; but from the 20th to the 24th year the collections were accurately determined and the five former ones accepted on the authority of persons of probity. The best crops were taken into account in each year, and the year of the most abundant harvest accepted, as the table shows.''[48]

To obviate the difficulty and inconvenience caused by the yearly assessment His Majesty ordered 'the ten-year assessment' and not as Jarrett translates (Ain II, p. 88) the decennial settlement. There was no decennial settlement as is generally supposed. What Todarmal did was to fix the assessment by averaging the assessments for ten years, *i.e.*, from the 15th to the 24th year of the reign.

The survey (*Paimaish*) of the entire land under cultivation was carefully done. Formerly hempen ropes were used which were liable to contract or lengthen, when the atmosphere was heated or moist. Todarmal used a *Jarib* of bamboos joined together by iron rings. Land was divided into four classes :—

(1) *Polaj* which was annually cultivated for each crop in succession and was never allowed to be fallow. This was land under continuous cultivation and yielded revenue from year to year.

(2) *Parauti* which was occasionally left fallow in order to recover its strength.

(3) *Chāchar* which remained fallow for three or four years.

(4) *Banjar* which remained uncultivated for five years or more.

48 Ain II, p. 88, Ain, 15.

The first two classes of land, namely, the *Polaj* and *Parauti*, were divided into three grades—good, middling and bad according to their yield. The average of the three was to be the estimated produce which was to be taken as the basis of the assessment. It will be clear by an illustration.

Here is land Class (I) producing wheat :—

good : 20 mds. per *bigha*

middling : 15 mds. per *bigha*

bad : 10 mds. 24 srs. per *bigha*

Total : 45 mds. 24 srs. One-third of this is 15 mds. 8 srs. which was the estimated average produce (*mahsūl*) and of this one-third, *i.e.*, 5 mds. 2⅔ srs. was to be fixed as the state demand.

The other two classes of land were dealt with differently. As they were not on a par with the first two classes in point of quality or produce, their revenue was to be increased by progressive stages.

Having ascertained the average produce, it was necessary to fix the state demand in cash or as we might say to fix the cash rates. It will be remembered that the old practice was to commute the produce into cash-rates according to the prices current at the time, but this was very troublesome as the periodical ascertainment of cash-rates entailed much unnecessary expenditure and caused a lot of delay in collections. Todarmal's solution of this difficulty was to fix cash-rates on the average of ten years' actuals. Abul Fazl tells us in the *Ain* how it was done. He says :

> " From the beginning of the 15th year of the Divine Era to the 24th an aggregate of collection was formed and a tenth of the total was fixed as the annual assessment ; but from the 20th to the 24th year the collections were

actually determined and the five former ones were accepted on the authority of persons of probity."[49]

The share of the state was unalterably fixed at one-third. It was no longer liable to fluctuation year after year. The farmer was given the option of paying in cash or kind. The cash-rates were fixed by state officers, and they were different for different crops. The rates for sugarcane and indigo, for example, were different from the rates for wheat and barley.

The process may be summed up thus :

When the season arrived, a staff of officers toured in the villages to ascertain the exact area of land under cultivation with a view to prepare the crop-statement. The area of each crop in each holding having been found out, the *Bitikchi* applied the prescribed rates and calculated the revenue due from the cultivator.

Various systems of revenue.

This was called the *Zabti* system of assessment.[50] It prevailed in the Subahs of Bihar, Allahabad, Multan, Oudh, Agra, Malwa, Delhi, Lahore and in certain parts of Ajmer and Gujarat. The essence of it was that each plot of land was to be charged with a fixed assessment in cash, which was determined according to the nature of the crop. Besides there were other systems of assessment prevalent in the empire. These were the *Ghallabakhsha* and *Nasaq* and certain others of which we find mention in the contemporary records. The *Ghallabakhsha* was the old Indian system of assessment by crop division and it prevailed in Thatta and parts of the Subahs of Kabul and

49 Ain II, p. 88.

50 The *Zabti* system prevailed very largely in Bihar, Alllahabad, Oudh, Agra, Malwa, Ajmer, Delhi, Lahore, Multan and parts of Gujarat.

The reader will bear in mind that there was no uniform system of land revenue in the empire. But the administrative ideal is to be found in the *Zabti* system.

Kashmir. The *Nasaq* was a ryotwari rather than a Zamindari arrangement. In this system there was no intermediary between the ryot and the state. None of these had the same elaborate organisation as the *Zabti* system which prevailed in the greater part of the empire.

Officers of Revenue Department.

Farming was not allowed. The government dealt directly with the agriculturists. The *Āmil* or the revenue collector was assisted by the *Bitikchi*, the *Potdar*, the Qānūngo, the patwari and the Muqaddams, whose duties have been described before. The instructions issued to these officers reveal the emperor's solicitude for the well-being of the peasantry. Much of what Abul Fazl says may be an ideal, but there is no doubt that the peasant was looked upon as an object of tender care and sympathy. In times of drought advances were made to the cultivators and public works were constructed to afford relief to the poor. Remissions were also made and there is a Sikh tradition that Akbar once remitted the revenue of the Punjab at the instance of Guru Arjuna. The collector was ordered to collect the revenue in an amicable manner, and 'not to extend the hand of demand out of season.' The peasant could pay his rent into the treasury himself, and the treasurer was not to demand a single extra coin. The *Patwari* was to give a detailed receipt stating the amount of rent and the area of land cultivated and the name of the village to which the cultivator belonged.

General remarks.

Reviewing the revenue administration of Akbar Dr. Vincent Smith writes: "In short, the system was an admirable one. The principles were sound, and the practical instructions to officials all that could be desired. But a person who has been in close touch, as the author has been, with the revenue administration from top to bottom, cannot help feeling considerable scepticism concerning the conformity of practice

with precept."[51] Now this is a mere surmise. There are no specific instances cited by Dr. Smith to prove that the revenue administration worked to the detriment of the ryot, and in his anxiety to prove that Akbar's administration was in no way better or more beneficent than the Anglo-Indian administration of which he was such a brilliant member, he draws the inference that the benevolent intentions of the autocrat were commonly defeated by his governors in the provinces. Dr. Smith may be excused this natural and perhaps legitimate vanity. But there is nothing to support the statement of Anglo-Indian historians that Todarmal's system was devised to prevent the state from being defrauded rather than to protect the interest of the ryot. The pages of the *Ain* are replete with information regarding the details of the revenue system, and it appears that on the whole it worked well, and took sufficient care of the interests of the people. An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory. Born and bred among the peasantry of the United Provinces where Dr. Vincent Smith spent the best part of his life, the present writer can affirm from his own experience that the condition of the peasantry has considerably deteriorated during the last 40 years. There must have been abuses in Akbar's day as they are now, and those who have any experience of village life must have seen people beaten and kicked by the underlings of the revenue department even in these days when the Taqavi loans are realised—and that is one of the few occasions when the government officials come in direct contact with the bulk of the agricultural population—and redress becomes impossible even in just cases owing to the cumbrous legal procedure that we have to follow and the indifference of the highest officials whose trust in the man on the spot is simply pathetic. The neces-

51 Akbar, pp. 366-67.

saries of life were cheap; and the Indian peasant lived under much better conditions, and enjoyed greater happiness than is possible to him under a 'low assessment and a well-organised administration.' The productivity of the soil was much greater than it is now. Social needs were simple, there was no false dignity to maintain, and what is now spent in upholding social prestige and in purchasing foreign articles of fashion was utilised in procuring things that helped to make life healthy and vigorous. Even the labourers lived in a state of comfort, and Mr. Moreland admits that towards the close of the 16th century a rupee purchased in the vicinity of the capital at least seven times as much grain as could be bought in Upper India in the years 1910—12. Things have grown worse since Mr. Moreland wrote. There was no dearth of grazing fields, and milk and ghee were obtainable cheaply and in plenty. The result of this is to be seen in the poor physique of our people and their utter inability to resist disease. Akbar's system conferred a great boon on the peasantry. The state demand was fixed, and every peasant knew what he had to pay. Adequate safeguards were provided, so far as human skill and statesmanship can go, to prevent fraud and corruption on the part of officers of the state. The highest officials of the crown were honest, and the Argus-eyed Todarmal watched every detail of the management with a meticulous care. Exactions and extortions, when brought to light, were severely punished and offenders did not escape scot-free, as they often do now by engaging the services of clever counsels. The emperor's wishes may not have been wholly fulfilled, and there may have been abuse of power in the remoter provinces, but there is no evidence to warrant the conclusion that the assessment weighed heavily on the peasantry, and that the revenue officers habitually disregarded the instructions issued to them.

When Akbar ascended the throne, the condition of the

army was far from satisfactory. The empire was divided into Jagirs, and the Amirs who held them were required to keep a certain number of horsemen, and were bound to serve the empire in time of need. The soldiers whom those fiefholders kept, were mostly inefficient men, absolutely unfit for active service. The state was constantly defrauded by its own officers. Whenever there was a muster, these men gathered together, as Badāoni says, lots of low tradesmen, weavers, cotton-cleaners, carpenters and green-grocers, both Hindu and Muslim, for review, and then they disappeared. They lacked discipline and equipment, and were at best a disorganised rabble. Akbar's attention was early drawn to the imperative necessity of military reform. In 1571 when Shahbaz Khan was appointed to the office of Mir Bakhshi, the emperor drew up a scheme of reform. The entire military organisation was based upon the *Mansabdari* system. Now, there is a great divergence of opinion regarding the actual working of this system, and all that can be done here is to state its broad features. What does the *Mansab* mean? The word *Mansab* means rank, dignity or office. Irvine who has made a close study of the military system of the Mughals, writes that its object was to settle precedence and fix gradation of pay. It only implied that the holder of a Mansab was in the service of the state, and was bound to render service military or othewise, when he was called upon to do so. Abul Fazl states in the *Ain* that there were 66 grades of *Mansabdars* in all, but it does not appear that there were more than 33 grades in actual existence. The lowest *Mansab* was that of 20 men rising to 5,000, though towards the close of the reign there were created *Mansabs* of 7,000 for officers highly honoured by the state. There was a special *Mansabdari* grade of 10,000, which was exclusively reserved for the scions of the royal family. The 7,000 grade was also reserved at first for royal princes,

The Mansabdari system.

although an exception was made in the case of certain officers like Mansingh, Todarmal and Qulich Khan. The appointment, promotion, suspension, and dismissal of *Mansabdars* rested entirely with the emperor. No portion of a *Mansabdar's* dignity was hereditary. His children, as was the custom, had to begin life anew after their father's death. A *Mansabdar* did not always begin at the lowest grade. If he happened to be a favourite of the emperor or a man whom the emperor was delighted to honour, he could be appointed to any rank open to him, which means that a man could get the highest *Mansab* without passing through the various grades by long and faithful service. Then the *Mansab* was not granted merely to military officers. As has been observed before, no such distinction was made between the military and civil departments. Officers both civil and military held *Mansabs*, and were frequently transferred from one branch of the administration to the other. Each *Mansabdar* was expected to maintain a certain number of horses, elephants, beasts of burden, and carts according to his rank and dignity, but whether the Mansabdars actually maintained the number indicated by their rank is a moot point. It appears that originally the emperor strictly enforced his regulations, but later relaxed them to some extent, and the *Mansabdars* kept much less than their fixed quota.[52]

There is a difficulty in connection with the *Mansabdari*

[52] Irvine says that in spite of musterings and brandings we may safely assume that very few *mansabdars* kept up at full strength even the quota of horsemen for which they received pay. The same writer goes on to add that Lutfullah Khan who held the rank of 7,000 never entertained even seven asses, much less horses or riders on horses.

The Army of the Indian Moghuls, p. 59.

Ibid., p. 6.

system which has baffled the ingenuity of scholars. It is the distinction between the *Zat* and *Sawar* ranks. Attempts have been made to define with accuracy the two ranks, but it is impossible in the state of our present knowledge to express final views in regard to them. The *Zat* was the personal rank of *Mansabdar*, but to this was added a number of extra horsemen for which an officer was allowed to draw extra allowance, and this was called his *Sawar* rank. A *Mansabdar's* rank according to this arrangement might be 2,000 *Zat* and 2,000 *Sawar*. On the basis of this distinction the officers excepting those who held mansabs of 5,000 were placed in three classes, and the scale of *Zat* pay was reduced proportionately. A *Mansabdar* belonged to the first class, if his rank in *Zat* and *Sawar* were equal, to the second class, if his *Sawar* was half his *Zat* rank, and to the third class, if his *Sawar* were less than half the *Zat*, or there were no *Sawar* at all. Blochmann's view that *Zat* indicated the nubmer of soldiers a *Mansabdar* was expected to keep, and *Sawar* indicated the number actually maintained by him does not seem to be correct. The reason for this is that the *Sawar* rank was introduced by Akbar later in his reign some time about 1603-4 at the time of the Deccan war and the rebellion of Salim. The word occurs in the *Ain*, but it should be borne in mind that the *Ain* is not a chronological summary of Akbar's administrative measures. It seems probable that the Deccan campaigns drove home to the emperor the necessity of keeping the army satisfied, and therefore he devised this method of increasing their emoluments by granting an extra allowance. The *Sawar* rank was an additional distinction, and there seems little doubt, that some allowance, which cannot be exactly determined, was paid to the officer concerned.

Distinction of Zat and Sawar.

Besides the *Mansabdars*, there were certain other soldiers called the *Dākhilīs* and *Ahadīs*. The *Dākhilīs* are defined in

the *Ain* as a fixed number of troops handed over to the *Mansabdars*, but paid by the state.[53] The *Ahadīs* formed a class by themselves. They were gentlemen troopers, recruited by the emperor himself to serve as his bodyguards. The *Ain* describes them as follows :—

The Dākhilīs and Ahadīs.

> "There are many brave and worthy persons whom His Majesty does not appoint to a *Mansab*, but whom he frees from being under the orders of any one. Such persons belong to the immediate servants of His Majesty and are dignified by their independence."[54]

There was a separate office (*Dīwān*) and a paymaster (*Bakhshī*) for the *Ahadīs*, and one of the distinguished nobles of the court was appointed as their chief. They were all horsemen, and the branding and muster regulations applied to them, as they did to the *Mansabdars*. The process of admission to the rank of *Ahadīs* was rather elaborate and is set forth in the *Āin* in great detail. The *Ahadīs* were better paid than common soldiers, and sometimes they drew as much as Rs. 500 per month.

The usual mode of paying the officers before Akbar was by grant of land, or assignment of the government revenue from land. The state and the officers both liked the system—the former because it escaped from the worry and bother of collecting its taxes in distant and intractable provinces, and the latter because they were sure of their income and rid of their dependence upon the court. Sometimes a noble got a valuable Jagir by bribling the officials, who had influence with the

Pay and Jagir.

53 Ain I, p. 254.

54 Ibid., pp. 249-50.

The word Ahadī literally means single or alone, and it is not clear why the term was applied to these soldiers.

emperor. Akbar did not approve of the Jagir system, because a Jagir very often amounted to a kind of *imperium in imperio* or a state within a state. The Jagirs were turned into Crown (*Khālsā*) lands and, so far as possible, Akbar paid his *Mansabdars* in cash and not by grants of land. This system worked well, and the Emperor found the direct administration of land more profitable and less fraudulent. The salaries of officers were counted in *dams*, forty of whirh went to make a rupee, but it is wellnigh impossible to determine the exact salary of a *Mansabdar*.

Abuses of the Mansabdari system.

The *Mansabdari* system was open to great abuse. The officers felt no qualms of conscience in cheating a government which did so much for them. False muster was a common phenomenon. On the day fixed, vagabonds, tramps, idlers, riding on small ponies and dressed in the uniform of soldiers, were brought for review. These passed for efficient soldiers and allowances were drawn with an easy conscience. To check this evil practice, the Emperor introduced branding and the system of descriptive rolls of men and horses. Branding was not a new thing. It was first introduced by Alauddin Khilji when he reorganised his army, and was continued by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq. Sher Shah also revived it and found it highly useful. Akbar created a separate department of branding under its own *Bakhshi* with a *darogha,* and issued rules and regulations for the guidance of his officers. Nobles holding the rank of 5,000 or more were exempted from the operation of these rules, but, if required, even they had to comply with the demands of the branding department. A descriptive roll (*Chihrah*) of the officer was prepared in which were entered his name, his father's name, his tribe or caste, his place of origin and details of his personal appearance. Elaborate descriptions of horses were also prepared, and the minutest details were recorded in order to minimise the

chances of deception.[55] The emperor did his best to check corruption in his service, but the purity which he desired ever remained a far-off adorable dream. The officers often misconducted themselves, and even those who were highly placed connived at the wickedness of the lower ranks. The strict enforcement of the state regulations was a highly odious task, and as Dr. Vincent Smith pertinently observes, the Bengal revolt of 1580 was partly due to the Emperor's insistence on the resumption of Jagirs, the preparation of descriptive rolls and the systematic branding of horses. Official greed and rapacity neutralised all precautions.

Branches of the Imperial Army.

The Imperial Army was composed of: (1) infantry, (2) artillery, (3) cavalry, and (4) the navy. From the prefatory remarks in the *Ain* (6, Book II) it appears that much importance was not attached to the infantry arm. It was largely composed of a multitude of men, assembled together without regard to rank or file—a mere rabble inadequately equipped with arms supplied in times of need by petty Zamindars or forest chieftains. The word was not used in the same sense, as it is done in our times. It had a wider connotation. It included foot-soldiers, transport-bearers, camp-followers, and others utterly ignorant of the art of fighting. The principal parts of the infantry arm were the *Bandūqchīs* or match-lockmen under the supervision of a separate *Bitikchi* and *Darogha* arranged in grades and the *Shamsherbāz*, who fought with their swords. Besides these

55 Here is a specimen of the descriptive rolls.

Qamar Ali, son of Mir Ali, son of Kabir Ali, wheat complexion, broad forehead, separated eye-brows, sheep's eyes, prominent nose, beard and moustache black, right ear lost from a sword cut, total height about 40 *Shānah*.

Horse—colour Kabūd (iron-grey); Mark on left breast; Mark on thigh on mounting side; Laskar (?) on thigh on whip side; Brand of four-pointed stamp.

Irvine, p. 48.

there were: (1) the *Darbans* or porters who were employed to guard the palace; (2) the *Khidmatiyās* who guarded the environs of the palace; (3) the *Pahalwāns* or wrestlers; and (4) the *Kahārs* or *palki*-bearers.

The composition of the infantry reveals its character. It included all kinds of men, who simply swelled the ranks without adding anything to military efficiency. The only effective part was the *Shamsherbāz* who fought with swords and daggers.

The Artillery was called by the name of *Topkhānā*. It was introduced in Northern India by Babar who made extensive use of it. Humayun had a good park of artillery, and Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, a contemporary and a rival of the former, also employed ordnance in his wars against his enemies. Guns were not only imported into the country, but were also cast in the south. But they were too heavy to be borne conveniently from one place to another. Akbar, who was himself a skilled mechanic, made these guns as light as possible. Detachable guns were manufactured, which could be broken into parts so as to be easily portable. This greatly improved the mobilization of the artillery, and made its extensive use in battles and sieges possible.

Artillery.

The Mughals were not themselves much advanced in artillery. They depended upon the help of the Rumis, *i.e.*, Muhammadans from Constantinople or Farangis mostly sailor refugees from Surat or Portuguese half-castes. They distrusted the Europeans, and treated them with contempt possibly because they did not like their 'abhorrent ways.' The chief artillery officer was the *Mīr Ātash* or *Daroghā-i-Topkhānā* (Superintendent of Ordnance Department), who was a *Mansabdar* of 5,000. The *Mīr Ātash* was assisted by a *Mushrif* in the discharge of his duties. His duties are defined as follows:—

"The *Mīr Ātash* laid before the Emperor all demands made on his department ; all orders to it passed through him. He checked the pay bills and inspected the diaries of the Arsenal before sending them on to the *Khān-i-Sāmān* or Lord Steward. He saw to the postings of the artillery force and received reports as to losses and deficiencies. The agent at the head of the artillery pay office was nominated by him. The descriptive rolls of artillery recruits passed through his hands ; all new appointments and promotions were made on his initiative."

Cavalry.

The cavalry was the most important branch of the imperial army. The *Mansabdari* system was nothing but the organisation of the cavalry arm. Akbar paid special attention to it, and strained every nerve to raise it to the highest pitch of efficiency. The branding regulations were devised for this purpose, that is, to compel the *mansabdars* to keep the required number of horsemen and to maintain horses of good quality. The importance of the cavalry is shown by the fact that Abul Fazl devotes several *Ains* to the discussion of the cavalry organisation and equipment. Minute rules are laid down regarding admission, muster, review, and the like, of horses, and officers of the state were strictly enjoined to look after them. The emperor personally inspected the horses in the royal stables, and cashiered his officers, if he found their management unsatisfactory.

Navy.

The Mughals were not a naval power. They had little experience of the sea except for purposes of trade. But Akbar's struggles with the Portuguese show that he fully perceived the importance of building up his naval strength. Dr. Vincent Smith, who puts implicit reliance on the Christian sources of information, underrates

the emperor's naval resources. But we learn from the *Ain* that there was an Admiralty department, which controlled and managed a fleet of boats. This department performed important duties: (1) the fitting of strong boats capable of carrying elephants; (2) the appointment of experienced seamen having knowledge of the ebb and flow of the ocean; (3) supervision of the rivers; and (4) the remission of tolls so as to enable boatmen to earn proper wages.[56] We read of boats fitted with light guns and other necessary equipments which were used in fighting. The main rivers of Northern India were navigable in those days, and much of the traffic was carried on by boats. The emperor gave encouragement to the shipbuilding industry. There were shipbuilding centres at Lahore, Allahabad and Kashmir, but the best sailors came from Malabar and Cambay. There were ships of all kinds, and sizes, manned by trained sailors, whose grades and ranks were regulated like those of the other officers.

Akbar maintained also an elephant corps. He was very fond of elephants and made much use of them in his battles.

Elephant corps.

The elephants used by him personally were called Khāsah (special); the rest were arranged in groups of ten, twenty or thirty called *halqahs* (or circles). The *Mansabdars* were required to maintain a certain number of elephants, and Abul Fazl states in the *Ain* that the emperor 'put several *halqahs* in charge of every grandee, and required him to look after them.' All elephants had names, and the practice is still common in India.

What was the total strength of the army? It is a difficult question to answer, and opinion is sharply divided on it. As

Strength of the Army.

Dr. Smith says, Akbar did not keep a large standing army like the Mauryan kings of old, and his forces consisted of three elements:

[56] Ain I, p. 270.

(1) The retainers of the *Mansabdars* including the *Dākhilī* and the *Kumuki* or auxiliary forces.

(2) *Ahadis* or gentlemen troopers, mostly those who failed to secure a *mansab*.

(3) The levies furnished by Rajput chiefs. These rendered active service in time of war, and Akbar was sure of their loyal support, because he always meted out to them a generous treatment.

Blochmann estimates the strength of the regular army paid directly from the royal treasury at 25,000, but this figure seems to be far short of the reality. Dr. Horn tried to calculate the strength of Akbar's army on the basis of the *Zat* list in the Ain, and reached the conclusion that it contained 384,758 cavalry, and 3,877,557 infantry, but these figures are rejected by Irvine. According to Monserrate, who writes from personal observation, the imperial army which marched to Kabul against Mirza Hakim, contained 45,000 cavalry, 5,000 elephants and many thousand infantry, paid directly from the royal treasury.[57]

Von Noer, relying on the testimony of some Jesuit writer, estimates the strength of the cavalry at 40,000 without specifying details. None of these writers helps us to determine with precision the actual numbers of the imperial army. Dr. Vincent Smith's suggestion that in normal times Akbar did not incur the expense of keeping a force as large as that raised to defeat his brother's attack, does not seem to be warranted by facts. Then, the figures are not abnormally high. The Khiljis and Tughluqs before him had maintained large armies. Sher Shah had done the same. The military situation in Akbar's reign was serious enough, and the emperor was always engaged either in quelling a revolt or in making a new

[57] Commentaries, pp. 88-89.

conquest. How could he have done so without a large army ever ready for active service? Besides, Hawkins who held a *mansab* under Jahangir says that the army in his time numbered three to four *lakhs*. Such an abnormal rise in the figures would be impossible, unless there were some extraordinary reasons for increasing the military strength of the empire. But we know that the military problems of Jahangir's reign were far less serious than those of Akbar. It seems, therefore, admissible on a modest computation that the army in Akbar's day was much larger than 25,000 and that it could not have been less than three *lakhs*.

Camp.

The camp was a normal feature of Mughal military life. It was the result of the nomadic influences that had surrounded their ancestors in Central Asia. They loved camp life, and the Mughal camp became a moving city where every comfort was provided, and the nobles vied with one another in displaying their wealth and splendour. The emperor was accompanied by his wives with their numerous female attendants, protected by a guard of four hundred men commanded by able captains. The camp had several advantages. It brought the emperor in touch with his soldiers as well as his subjects, and enabled him to acquire knowledge of the country at first hand. Encampment in open plains, away from the dirt and filth of cities, improved the health of the soldiers and increased their efficiency and vigour. Everything was well looked after in Akbar's time. Discipline was strictly enforced, and the European travellers, who lived in Jahangir's reign, write that in the camp they felt as secure as in their homes. But in later years the camp became unwieldy, and its leisurely movements made it a hindrance rather than a help to the emperor in time of war. Women were allowed to accompany their husbands, and their presence not only lowered the *morale* of the army, but also added to its anxiety, for the enemy could

raid the camp and capture the women. The insidious poison of luxury undermined military vigour, and the ever-increasing fondness for the amenities of life interfered with the performance of duty. The evil became so serious in the time of Aurangzeb that his armies found it impossible to cope with the light Maratha horsemen and suffered irreparable ruin at their hands.

General Remarks.

These observations may be summed up by making a few general remarks about the Mughal army. Dr. Vincent Smith who describes Akbar's military organisation as 'intrinsically weak' expresses the view that his army could not have stood for a moment against the contemporary European troops.[58] He does not mention specifically any trials of strength between the Portuguese and the Mughal forces, although he overrates the military strength of the former. Such a surmise is unnecessary as well as irrelevant. The Portuguese were superior to the Mughals in naval equipment, but from this it would be unfair to generalise about the efficiency of the army as a whole. An army which conquered Hindustan, a part of the Deccan and the Afghan regions, and which quelled formidable revolts in the most outlying provinces of the empire and overawed the Uzbegs and Persians, cannot have been so poor and inefficient as Dr. Smith supposes. Yet it was not without defects. The loyalty of the soldier towards the emperor was not direct ; and he depended far too much upon the intermediate leader. The death of a general caused a panic in the army and was a signal for flight. The success of the army was often hampered by divided command. Two generals were entrusted with the same expedition, and they often quarrelled between themselves as happened during the campaign against the Yusufzais. Then, there was no common plan of action agreed to by the various

58 Akbar, pp. 66-67.

sections of the army. The Rajputs adhered to their own manœuvres, and at times greatly embarrassed their allies. As years passed, the army became more and more cumbrous, and during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb it became a huge, undisciplined rabble, incapable of 'swift action or brilliant adventure.'

CHAPTER XV

THE EMPIRE AT ITS ZENITH

JAHANGIR AND SHAHJAHAN

Accession of Jahangir.

All political intrigues having failed, Jahangir ascended the throne of his father on October 24, 1605 at Agra in the midst of great rejoicings. He was at this time 36 years of age and in the full vigour of manhood. His liberal education, his natural shrewdness, and his strong commonsense well qualified him to carry on the statesmanlike policy of his father. Soon after his accession, he caused the famous chain of justice to be fastened between the Shahburj in the fort of Agra and a stone pillar fixed on the bank of the Jumna.[1] His object in doing so was to enable aggrieved persons to lay their petitions before him and to obtain redress. The chain was doubtless prompted by the emperor's high sense of justice, but it does not seem to have been pulled frequently in practice by suppliants, who must have greatly dreaded the wrath of the autocrat. This was accompanied by the celebrated twelve ordinances, which the emperor commanded to be observed as rules of conduct (*dastūr-ul-amal*) in his wide dominions.[2] The emperor freely showered his gifts both upon the Hindus and Muslims. A general amnesty was granted to

[1] Jahangir himself describes this chain. It was, says he, of pure gold, 30 *gaz* in length and contained 60 bells. It weighed 4 Indian maunds equal to 42 Iraqi maunds. R. B., I, p. 7.

[2] Memoirs, I, pp. 7—10.

Sir Henry Elliot (VI, pp. 493—515) has commented upon these ordinances at length, but his criticism is not correct in every respect. It is true, some of these regulations were mere pious wishes, but there is no reason to suppose that every one of them was a piece of futile legislation.

all his former opponents, and they were restored to their titles and dignities. Abdur Rahman, the son of Abul Fazl, was promoted to the rank of 2,000, and Aziz Koka who had conspired against him was allowed to retain his rank and jagirs. There were several other notable officers who shared in the royal bounty. Ghiyas Beg, the father of Nurjahan, was appointed to the rank of 1,500, and was given the title of Itmad-ud-dowlah. The officers of Akbar's time were treated with kindness, and Jahangir openly declared that a whole class should not be condemned for the faults of a few malcontents. But the most undeserved elevation was that of Raja Bir Singh Bundela, the murderer of Abul Fazl, who was raised to the rank of 3,000.

Securely seated on the throne, Jahangir celebrated the first *Nauroz* with great éclat and splendour in March, 1606. The festivities lasted for 17 or 18 days, and were finally closed by the bestowal of generous gifts on the loyal and distinguished servants of the state.

Rebellion of Prince Khusrau.

It will be remembered that when Akbar lay on his death-bed, Raja Man Singh had formed a conspiracy to set aside the claims of Salim and to place his son Khusrau on the throne in his stead. After Akbar's death a reconciliation was effected between the valiant Raja and Salim, and Khusrau was presented at court. The emperor treated him with affection, and granted a lakh of rupees to provide him with a suitable mansion, befitting his high rank and dignity. But this reconciliation was merely on the surface. The father and son were completely estranged from each other, and no amount of diplomacy or persuasive pleading could heal their lacerated hearts. Jahangir thought that his son had irreparably wronged him, while Khusrau who was a fiery and impetuous youth, scarcely able to appraise the consequences of his own actions, still hoped to make an attempt to realise his dream of getting the throne. He looked upon the

emperor's kindness and favours as a snare to catch him in his meshes and longed to be free. His engaging manners, his lovely presence, and his high station, all made him a fit centre of political intrigue and disaffection. In no time, he gathered around him a few hundred adherents, who swore fidelity to him, and promised him aid in the desperate enterprise on which he had set his heart.

It is true that Khusrau was much distracted. He spent days and nights in brooding over the misery and grief that lay in store for him. One night, he quietly stole away from the fort of Agra at the head of 350 horsemen on a pretence of visiting the tomb of his grandfather.

When he reached Mathura, he was joined by Husain Beg Badakhshani with nearly 3,000 horsemen. The prince and his adherents plundered and laid waste the neighbouring country, and the mercenaries who had joined his banner, tried to satisfy their greed for gold by practising tyranny and oppression upon those who came in their way. The prince marched on, and at Panipat he was joined by Abdur Rahim, Diwan of Lahore, who was coming towards Agra to wait on the emperor. The Diwan received a warm welcome from the prince who made him his Wazir, and conferred upon him the title of Malik Anwar. The imperial officers whom the prince encountered in his onward march, failed to impede his progress, and at Taran Taran he received the blessing of Guru Arjuna, the editor of the Granth Sahib, who took pity on him in his wretched and forlorn condition and gave him some monetary help. From thence Khusrau marched towards Lahore, but the city was guarded by Dilawar Khan who had reached there in advance. The bastions of the fort were repaired, and cannon and swivel guns were kept in readiness for battle. Dilawar Khan was reinforced by Said Khan, who happened to be encamped at this time on the bank of the Chenab.

Khusrau laid siege to the city, and burnt one of its gates

in rage, and told his men that after the capture of the fort he would give the city up to plunder for seven days and throw the women and children into prison.

The siege went on for nine days, when the prince was informed that the emperor had arrived in the vicinity of Lahore at the head of a cavalry force.

The flight of the prince was a serious matter, and what Jahangir feared most was his junction with Raja Man Singh in Bengal or the Uzbegs and Persians towards the North-western border. Having placed Agra in charge of Nazirulmulk and Itmad-ud-dowlah, the emperor started in pursuit of the prince and reached the place with a considerable force. Negotiations were opened with the prince but to no purpose. He persisted in his evil course and prepared for battle. A battle was fought at Bharowal in which the rebels were severely defeated. About four hundred of them were slain in battle, and those that survived were terribly affrighted. Khusrau himself escaped from the field of battle, and his box, containing jewellery and other precious articles, fell into the hands of the imperialists, but Khusrau was not yet safe. The divided counsels of his own followers distressed him most. The Afghans and Hindustanis wished 'to double back like foxes into Hindustan' and to stir up strife there. Husain Beg whose family had already left towards the west suggested that they should betake themselves to Kabul. At last his advice was accepted, but when the party attempted to cross the Chenab, they were arrested by the imperialists.

Jahangir received the news of Khusrau's capture with great delight. Little did he reck of the tie which bound him to the prince, and steeled his heart to vindicate the authority of the state and to safeguard its interests. The people of Lahore as well as the officers, civil and military, of the empire, watched in anxious suspense the fate of the royal captive. Jahangir too was overcome with emotion, but he pulled himself up and

ordered the prince to be presented in the open Darbar. The prince appeared before his august sire, handcuffed and enchained, weeping profusely, and trembling like a willow leaf. The pathetic scene moved the hearts of all who were present but the emperor was implacable. He reprimanded Khusrau in strong terms, and ordered him to be thrown into prison without betraying the least emotion or perturbation. The prince's followers were punished with inhuman barbarity, and he himself was subjected to unspeakable insults and indignities.

Guru Arjuna, who had shown compassion to Khusrau in his dire distress, was summoned to court to answer for his conduct. His property was confiscated and he was ordered to be put to death. The murder of the Guru, although it was due to political reasons, was a heinous crime. It embittered the feelings of the Sikhs, and gave evidence of reaction against the tolerant policy of Akbar. Dr. Beni Prasad's statement that Guru Arjuna himself would have ended his days in peace, if he had not espoused the cause of a rebel, is a poor vindication of imperial highhandedness. He seems to regard the execution of the holy man, who was the recognised spiritual head of a large section of the people, as a trivial matter. But the blood of the martyrs is the cement of the church, and Jahangir made a great mistake in treating the Guru like an ordinary culprit. The Sikh opposition to the Mughal empire began.

Siege of Qandhar.

Qandhar occupies a highly important and strategic position towards the North-West Frontier. In the 17th century, it was an important gateway of commerce, and it is said that every year nearly 14 thousand camels, laden with merchandise, passed from India *via* Qandhar into Persia. The strong and enviable position of this mart of the east made it a bone of contention between Persia and Hindustan. Babar had conquered Qandhar, and on his death it had passed to his son Kamran. Humayun wrested it from his brother Askari in 1545 with Persian aid, but after his

death the Persian King again conquered it in 1558, when Akbar turned his attention towards the North-West Frontier. The Persian governor Muzaffar Husain surrendered it to the imperialists, and offered himself to be enrolled among the grandees of the empire. Qandhar remained a part of the Mughal Empire until the death of Akbar.

But the Persians never forgot the loss of such a valuable place. Jahangir writes in his *Memoirs* that the death of Akbar and the disturbance caused in the country by Khusrau's revolt 'put an edge on their design,' and they resolved on reconquest. The king of Persia was at this time Shah Abbas, who ranks among the greatest of the Asiatic rulers of his time. His vast resources encouraged him to try conclusions with the Mughal Empire. The Persians made the attack, but it was gallantly repelled by Shah Beg Khan, who treated the enemy with contempt, and fortified his position against further venture. When the news reached Jahangir, he sent a reinforcement under the leadership of Mirza Ghazi, son of Mirza Jani Tarkhān, the ruler of Thatta. The Persians were frightened, and they raised the siege. Shah Abbas diplomatically expressed his disapproval of the conduct of his subjects, and the emperor who was not inclined to take any further action was satisfied with the explanation.

The Persians, however, did not give up all hope of regaining Qandhar. Shah Abbas, having failed to win the place by open war, employed diplomacy to further his end. He sent several embassies to the Mughal court, and exchanged the most fulsome and adulatory compliments with the emperor. Soft words and rich presents threw the Mughals off their guard, and they neglected the defences of Qandhar.

In 1622 the Shah again attempted the conquest and laid siege to the fort. Jahangir and Nurjahan who happened to be at this time in Kashmir, quitted the place immediately, and began to make preparations for the campaign. The princes and

generals of the army were ordered to put their troops in readiness and to march to the scene of action. But the imperial plan was unexpectedly frustrated by Shahjahan's refusal to accompany the expedition. He was alarmed for his own safety. He knew, that during his absence from the capital, Nurjahan and Asaf Khan would do their best to ensure his exclusion from the throne, and to push the claims of Shahariyar, his rival and opponent. There was another reason. He felt that unless he was given the chief command, he would not be able to make headway against the Persians who had concentrated on the siege in full strength and vigour. His refusal gave Nurjahan her long-desired opportunity of inflaming her husband's mind against him. She convinced the latter that the prince meditated treason. An order was forthwith issued, asking the prince to send to court all the leading officers and the forces which he had with him in the Deccan. Shahjahan did not promptly obey the royal command, and the crisis was aggravated when Nurjahan secured from Jahangir the fief of Dholpur for Shahariyar, which Shahjahan had long coveted. Not content with this, she persuaded her doting husband to raise her son-in-law's rank to 12,000 *Zat* and 8,000 *Sawar* and to entrust him with the supreme command of the Qandhar campaign. The hasty and ill-advised resumption of the prince's jagirs in the north proved the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. The prince made apologetic protestations of his devotion to the throne, but nothing served to allay the wrath, kindled by Nurjahan's backstair intrigues. However hard the consequences, he found rebellion as his inevitable choice in these circumstances.

While the Nurjahan clique was planning the ruin of Shahjahan, Qandhar was captured by the Persians after a siege lasting over a month and a half. This was followed by the despatch of a fresh embassy to convince Jahangir that the Persian King had a rightful claim to Qandhar.

The Shah's effusive expressions of loyalty and friendship were taken at their proper value by the emperor, who rebuked him for his breach of faith and accused him of duplicity and insincerity. An expedition was forthwith ordered to punish the insolent and deceitful Persians, but no sooner was the command settled than the news came that Shahjahan had raised the standard of revolt.

Plot against the emperor.

After the first capture of Qandhar, Jahangir spent a summer at Kabul for the benefit of his health. He left that place some time in August 1607, for Lahore, but on his way he received information that a plot was formed to assassinate him. Prince Khusrau was the centre of the plot. His charming manners had won the hearts of his captors so much that they entered into a conspiracy to murder the emperor and to proclaim him as emperor of Hindustan. The plan was thoroughly ill-conceived; it was known to many people long before it matured, and in no time the whole thing was divulged to the emperor. The ringleaders were arrested, but they were dealt with leniently. Only four were executed, and one was seated on an ass with his face towards the tail and paraded in this sorry condition from house to house. Khusrau was blinded by Mahabat Khan, who was commissioned by Jahangir to do the ghastly deed.[3] But his vision was not altogether destroyed, and later when his father relented, it was partially restored through the skill of a competent physician.

[3] Authorities differ as to the mode of blinding the prince. But we read in the *Intikhāb-i-Jahangiri* that 'when the wire was put in his eyes, such pain was inflicted on him, that it is beyond all expression.'

Experienced physicians were employed to cure the eyes of the Prince when paternal love asserted itself. A Persian physician Sadra by name treated the prince, and we are told that in six months the original vision of one of his eyes was restored. The other remained defective and became somewhat shorter in size. The physician was rewarded with the title of *Masih-uz-Zamān*, Elliot, VI, pp. 448-49.

Marriage with Nurjahan.

Jahangir's marriage with Nurjahan is one of the most important events in Mughal history. Few women in the world's history have displayed such masterful qualities of courage and statesmanship as this extraordinary woman, who held her husband in leading strings and dominated the state for a number of years. Students of Indian history are well familiar with the romantic story of her birth, which has been related with great embellishments by Muslim chroniclers. But modern research has discarded the legendary account, and placed before us the plain facts regarding her early life. Her father Mirza Ghiyas Beg, son of Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, was a native of Tehran. Driven by the pressure of adverse circumstances, Ghiyas Beg turned his thought towards Hindustan whither he proceeded with his wife, who was big with child, in search of employment. When he reached Qandhar, his wife was delivered of a female child. As the family was in great straits, a certain wealthy merchant named Malik Masud under whose protection they were coming to India took pity on them, and offered his help. It was a veritable God-send to Ghiyas, whose heart was broken by the sufferings and troubles through which he had passed. The merchant who had some influence at the Mughal court, introduced Ghiyas to Akbar, and got him a handsome employment in the state. By sheer dint of merit, the homeless adventurer rose to high position, and in 1595 became a *Mansabdar* of 300, and held the responsible post of Diwan of Kabul. Ghiyas's talents shone to the best advantage while he was in office. He cultivated after the fashion of the time calligraphy and poetry, and acquired a reputation for elegant diction. He showed great skill in transacting public business, and came to be looked upon as one of the cleverest officers of the state, notwithstanding the fact that he was bold and daring in taking bribes. The little child who was named Miherunnissa by her parents grew up in the meantime, and at the age of 17

was married to Ali Quli Istājlū, a Persian adventurer, who is better known in history as Sher Afghan.

Ali Quli Istājlū was a man of humble origin. He was a *safarchi* (table servant) of Shah Ismail II of Persia. A strange turn of fortune drove him from his native country, and like many others of his kind, he also sought refuge in India. On reaching Multan, he met the Khan-i-Khanan through whose good offices he was granted a military rank at the Mughal court in the time of Akbar. When Prince Salim was ordered to march against the Rana of Mewar, Ali Quli was appointed to his staff. The proud and manly bearing of the Persian soldier pleased the prince, who conferred upon him the title of Sher Afgan for slaying a tiger.[4] During the Prince's rebellion against his father, most of his friends deserted him, and considerations of prudence led Sher Afgan also to follow their example. But after his accession, Jahangir forgave his offences, confirmed his jagir, and sent him to the Subah of Bengal.

Bengal was at this time seething with discontent. The turbulent Afghans, who still hoped to revive their lost supremacy, gathered there from all parts of the country, and fomented intrigues against the state. Report came that Sher Afgan was 'insubordinate and disposed to be rebellious.' How could the emperor brook such designs on the part of one, whom he had raised from obscurity to high military rank? The governor Qutbuddin, who had succeeded Raja Man Singh in August, 1606, was commanded to send the suspected officer to court. The governor took the somewhat foolish step of making an attempt to arrest him. Sher Afgan's blood boiled at this indignity, and when he saw Qutbuddin's men surrounding him on all sides, he exclaimed with rage 'what proceeding is this of thine?' He was so shocked by this treachery that when Qutbuddin advanced forward to explain his conduct, he

[4] Sher Afgan شیر افگن literally means one who fells down a lion.

attacked him with his sword, and inflicted mortal injuries on his person. This unexpected attack infuriated the Mughal retainers of the governor, who fell upon Sher Afgan like hungry wolves, and hacked him to pieces. Miherunnissa along with her daughter was sent to court, where she was entrusted to the custody of the dowager-Queen Sultan Salima Begum. In March, 1611, *i.e.*, four years after the death of her husband, Jahangir once chanced to see her at the fancy bazar, and was charmed by her beautiful appearance. Time assuaged her grief, and she became reconciled to her imperial lover. Towards the close of May, she became the legally married wife of the lord of Hindustan. A new chapter opened in the history of her family. Her father and brother were exalted to high positions, and were granted titles and jagirs.

Whether Jahangir had a hand in the murder of Sher Afghan is a matter of controversy. Dr. Beni Prasad in his able monograph on Jahangir seriously contends that the story of the murder is a pure myth invented by later chroniclers.[5] He argues that there is no confirmation of this story in contemporary writings, nor is there any mention of it in the accounts of European travellers, who were too eager to seize upon scandals relating to members of the royal family. The improbabilities of the story itself on which he dwells at length, are of little value in helping us to form a correct judgment. The evidence of the emperor's innocence adduced by him is of a negative character, and we cannot lightly brush aside the positive assertions of later historians, who were in a better position to state the truth in a matter like this than their predecessors. There are other considerations which militate against the theory of innocence. The chief offence of Sher Afgan is said to be that he was guilty of treason, but no details of his participation in seditious conspiracy are disclosed. The emperor had merely

5 History of Jahangir, pp. 178—83

a suspicion, and all authorities agree in saying that Qutbuddin was ordered to punish Sher Afgan, if the latter '*showed any futile, seditious ideas.*' It is not clear how Qutbuddin satisfied himself on his arrival in Bengal that the Persian officer actually harboured treasonable designs. The cause of royal displeasure was not even communicated to him, and our suspicions are confirmed by the suddenness with which his arrest was attempted. Jahangir, who is usually so frank in relating his life-story, does not say a word about this incident for the obvious reason that no man would relate scandals about himself, but his silence regarding the fact of his marriage with Nurjahan, which was undoubtedly the most momentous event in his career, is wholly unintelligible.[6] Why were royal commands issued to send Miherunnissa to court, when her father was living at the capital, and held an important office in the state?[7] There was no question about his loyalty, and surely he could be safely trusted to take care of his daughter and her little child in their sorrowful plight. Such a thing was never done in the case of other noblemen and officers charged with sedition. Why did the emperor take the somewhat unusual step of entrusting the widowed lady to the care of the dowager-Queen in the imperial *haram*? But it may be asked why the emperor, if he was an impetuous lover, waited for four long years, when the object of his desire was well within

[6] Jahangir mentions Nurjahan's name for the first time in recording the events of the years 1614 three years after his marriage. There are many trivial details, but not a word is said about Nurjahan. His account of Sher Afgan's death is entirely devoid of a mention of Nurjahan. R. B. Memoirs, I, p. 266.

[7] Mutamād Khan writes: "After the death of Kutub-uddin, the officials of Bengal, *in obedience to royal command*, sent to court the daughter of Ghiyas Beg, who had been exalted to the title of 'Itimad-ud-dowlah,' and the King, who was greatly distressed at the murder of Kutub-uddin, entrusted her to the keeping of his own royal mother."

Elliot, VI, p. 404.

his reach? Probably he did so for two reasons. Nurjahan was overpowered by the tragic death of her husband, and her sorrow-laden heart shrank, at least for some time, from all thought of love and pleasure. Secondly, perhaps the emperor did not interfere with her, because he wished to lull all suspicions regarding the death of Sher Afgan, which was so unexpected and precipitate. The Dutch writer De Laet says that Jahangir had been in love with Nurjahan, even when she was a maiden during the lifetime of Akbar, but her betrothal to Sher Afgan proved an obstacle in the way of marriage.[8] A careful perusal of contemporary chronicles leaves upon our minds the impression that the circumstances of Sher Afgan's death are of a highly suspicious nature, although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the emperor was guilty of the crime.

Character of Nurjahan.

At the time of her marriage with Jahangir, Nurjahan was in her thirty-fifth year, but advancing age had done nothing to mar the freshness of her charms. She still possessed the beauty of her early youth, and the portraits that have come down to us are indicative of her superb loveliness. Nature reinforced by art had greatly added to her charms, and made her name famous for all that is lovable and attractive in womankind. She possessed a strong and virile intellect, and could understand the most intricate political problems without any difficulty. No political or diplomatic complication was beyond

[8] Description of India and Fragment of Indian History, p. 181. De Laet relates at some length the story of Jahangir's marriage with Nurjaran. He says: "He (Jahangir) had been in love with her when she was still a maiden, during the lifetime of Achabar (Akbar); but she had already been betrothed to the Turk Cheer Affeghan (Sher Afgan), and hence his father would not allow him to marry her, although he never entirely lost his love for her." This is corroborated by Muhammadan historians also. If this were true, the motive for the murder is clear.

who was destitute of brains and character, and whom his contemporaries rightly gave the nickname of Nashūdānī or 'good for nothing.' The prince refused to march to Qandhar, because he knew that the imperious Begum had spread the net of her intrigue wide, and swept into it the leading nobles of the court. Even Dr. Beni Prasad admits that during his absence Nurjahan was sure to push her creature Shahariyar to the front, and undermine Khurram's power by replacing his adherents with hers in high offices of state, by playing upon the feelings and fancies of her husband, and by taking full advantage of any opportunities, which might present themselves in the meanwhile.[10] It was under her influence that Jahangir became a thorough-bred pleasure-seeker, and so far forgot the duties of his exalted office as to say that Nurjahan was wise enough to conduct the matters of state, and that he wanted only a bottle of wine and a piece of meat to keep himself merry. The remark may have been made in jest, but it indicates well enough the easy-going habit of the man, who was by no means lacking in intelligence, and who had given proof of his far-sightedness by proclaiming that he meant to adhere to the policy of his great father. His innate fondness for pleasure was developed by Nurjahan to a perilous extent, and if Jahangir's reign forms an inglorious period in the annals of the Mughal dynasty, she must share the responsibility in no small measure. The new fashions and tastes which she fostered are a poor compensation for the lack of military achievement or administrative reform, which must always remain the supreme test of the greatness of rulers and statesmen. The dominating Begum made her husband travel fast on the path of ease, until he ceased to take all interest in public business, and began to look upon alcohol as a 'prudent friend.' Most of his regulations remained in abeyance, and

10 History of Jahangir, p. 349.

the Nurjahan clique managed or mismanaged, as it chose, the affairs of the empire. The era of brilliant or heroic enterprise was closed for the time, and the various parties and factions at court were consumed with a feverish activity to oust their rivals from positions of power and influence.

Akbar had annexed Bengal to the empire in 1575 after the defeat of Daud, but the Afghans were not completely crushed. They found an able and ambitious leader in Usmān, who, though outwardly loyal to the Mughals, cherished the dream of restoring Afghan independence. He had rebelled once before in 1599 in the reign of Akbar, but he was suppressed by Raja Mansingh. The rapid change of governors in Bengal encouraged his in his hostile designs, and when Islām Khan was appointed to the office of governor after the death of Jahangir Quli who had succeeded Qutbuddin,[11] the Afghans and Zamindars of Bengal showed open hostility to the central government. The Afghans rallied under the banner of Usmān, and prepared themselves for a trial of strength with the imperialists. Both sides engaged each other in battle, and after a strenuous day on the field he was fatally wounded on the head, but so great was his composure that even in this condition he continued to direct the movements of his men for six hours. The battle ended in the defeat of the Afghans who retreated to their entrenchments. Here Usmān died, leaving his followers in a state of disorder.

Usmān's Rebellion in Bengal.

The news of this victory was received at court (April 1, 1612) with great delight, and Jahangir suitably rewarded the officers, who had distinguished themselves in the campaign. Islām Khan's rank was raised, and the other officers who had rendered him loyal assistance were fitly honoured. The

[11] This Qutbuddin is the same person who lost his life in the scuffle with Sher Afgan, the first husband of Nurjahan.

political power of the Afghans was destroyed, but they were treated well by Jahangir, who allowed them with pleasure to enter the service of the state. As a result of this humane policy, writes the author of the *Makhzan-i-Afghan*, the Afghans abolished all treasonable designs from their minds, and considered it their duty to remain subservient and loyal to the throne even at the sacrifice of their lives.

Submission of Mewar.

Soon after his accession to the throne, Jahangir resumed his father's policy in regard to the principality of Mewar. Prince Parwez was appointed to the command, and with him were associated well-tried officers who had given proof of their valour in several campaigns. The first battle was an indecisive one, and ended in a truce between the two parties. Two years later, the emperor sent Mahabat Khan at the head of a considerable force, and the latter succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Rajputs. Frequent changes in command seriously hampered the progress of operations, and nothing substantial was achieved until Price Khurram was placed at the head of the expedition. Assisted by some of the ablest military officers, the prince opened the campaign in full vigour. The Mughal soldiers who were exasperated by prolonged Rajput resistance, carried fire and sword in their train, and rendered large tracts of land desolate. The prince established military posts in favourable localities in order to cut off the supplies of the enemy and to starve them into submission. Still the Rajputs did not desist from fighting, and their reckless daring made an impression on the Mughals. But the tactics of the latter succeeded. The moving columns of the Mughal army captured the families of several chiefs, and reduced the Rana to such straits that he began to desire the termination of the campaign. From all sides came the demand that peace should be made. The Rana sent his maternal uncle Shubh Karan and his trusty officer Hari Dās Jālā to settle the terms of the

treaty. He agreed to pay homage to the emperor and to send his son to the imperial court, but himself begged to be excused from personal attendance on account of old age. Jahangir gladly accepted the terms of peace, for he writes: "My lofty mind was always desirous, as far as possible, not to destroy the old families."[12] Chittor was restored to the Rana, but he was asked not to fortify it. No matrimonial alliance was forced on him; he was simply asked to supply a contingent of 1,000 horse, and his son was enrolled as a *mansabdar* of 5,000. A meeting was arranged between Prince Khurram and the Rana at which they exchanged greetings, and offered valuable presents to each other.[13]

The Rana's heir-apparent Prince Karan also waited on Prince Khurram, and received as a mark of favour a superb dress of honour, a jewelled sword and dagger, and horse with a gold saddle and a special elephant.[14]

Jahangir's conduct in this affair is wholly worthy of praise. Mewar had given the Mughals no small amount of trouble, but the emperor forgot the past and adopted a conciliatory policy in dealing with the Rana. He was so pleased at this achievement that he ordered two full-sized marble statues of the Rana and his son to be made in order to be placed at Agra in the garden below the Jharokha. These elephants were removed from Agra by Aurangzeb in 1668, but no trace is to be found of them now.

[12] R. B., I, pp. 273-74.

[13] Jahangir says (R. B., I, p. 276) that the Rana clasped his (Khurram's) feet and asked forgiveness for his faults. This does not seem to be likely. In the first place no Rajput however humbled, would condescend to show such servility, and secondly, it was not a recognised mode of paying respect to kings or princes.

[14] According to the Rajput usage the prince did not go with his father to pay respects to the prince.

When the emperor was returning from a tour in Gujarat, news came that the bubonic plague had broken out in Hindustan.[15] Jahangir briefly describes the disease by saying that 'under the armpits, or in the groin, or below the throat, buboes formed, and they died.'[16] The contemporary chronicler Mutamād Khan writes that the foul disease first began in the Punjab, spread to Sarhind, and then throughout the Doab as far as Delhi and its neighbouring cities and villages. His account of the disease is as correct to-day as it was when he wrote it. This is what he says:

Outbreak of epidemic.

"When it was about to break out, a mouse would run out of its hole as if mad, and, striking itself against the door and the walls of the house, would expire. If immediately after this signal, the occupants left the house and went to the jungle their lives were saved; if otherwise, the inhabitants of the whole village would be swept away by the hand of death.

If any person touched the dead, or even the clothes of a dead man, he also could not survive the fatal contact. The effect of the epidemic was comparatively more severe upon the Hindus. In Lahore its ravages were so great, that in one house ten or twenty persons would die, and their surviving neighbours, annoyed by the stench, would be compelled to desert their houses full of habitations. The dead were left locked, and no person dared to go near them through fear of his life. It was also very severe in Kashmir, where its effect was so great that (as an instance) a darvesh, who had performed the last said offices of washing the corpse of a friend, the very next day shared

[15] The author of the *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* calls this epidemic *Wabā-o-tāaun*.

[16] R. B., II, p. 65.

the same fate. A cow, which had fed upon the grass on which the body of the man was washed, also died. The dogs, also, which ate the flesh of the cow, fell dead upon the spot. In Hindustan no place was free from this visitation, which continued to devastate the country for a space of eight years."[17]

It broke out again in 1618-19 in Agra, and spread to all the villages and towns in the neighbourhood, although Fatehpur was quite free from it. The emperor was informed by loyal persons that the daily average of deaths was nearly 100.[18] The houses of the rich and the poor were equally affected, and thousands of lives were destroyed. The people were simply bewildered by the appearance of this fell disease, but there is nothing to show that the state devised any preventive measures against its deadly visitations. Mutamād Khan, the historian of Jahangir's reign, writes that it exceeded everything known and recorded in former ages.

Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe.

Captain William Hawkins came to Jahangir's court in 1608 from England with a letter from James I in order to obtain facilities for trade. In spite of Portuguese opposition, he succeeded in having an audience of the emperor, who received him graciously, and accepted the costly presents offered by him. He was appointed a *mansabdar* of 400 with a nominal salary of 30,000. The emperor liked him much, and invited him to be present at his drinking parties. The trade facilities which he sought were readily granted.

Hawkins writes at length about the emperor's habits, the etiquette of the court, and the system of administration and the social condition of the people. The emperor drank hard,

17 Elliot, VI, p. 406.

18 R. B., II, p. 65.

kept a sumptuous table, and gave feasts, the most important of which was the feast of Nauroz. The law of Escheat was prevalent in the country, and the emperor was the last heir of all nobles and grandees. Their acquisitions after death passed to him, and in this way his treasures multiplied beyond reckoning. He mentions four causes of this abundance of wealth: (1) the treasure and jewels of his ancestors; (2) the property of nobles passing into his hands after their death; (3) money brought into the country by foreign merchants, and (4) the possession of land. Deeds of cruelty were common at court, and Hawkins observes that he saw with his own eyes the victims of royal wrath, destroyed in a savage manner by heartless ruffians.

Sir Thomas Roe was the accredited representative of the King of England, who visited Jahangir's court in 1615 with the object of obtaining some concession for the English trade. When he came to India, he was in the prime of life, of pleasing manners and a prepossessing appearance. His education and urbanity, coupled with his sturdy commonsense and diplomatic experience, eminently qualified him for the task. The real object of his mission was to conclude a commercial treaty with the ruler of Hindustan—an exceedingly difficult task owing to the intrigues of rival parties and the misgivings of the imperial court; yet Sir Thomas Roe did not flinch from his duty, and, in spite of refusals and disappointments persevered in his attempts to secure advantageous terms for his nation. The Nurjahan clique was in power at this time, and it was impossible to get anything done without the help of Asaf Khan, the chief minister of Jahangir, and Prince Khurram. The ambassador had to sell a valuable pearl to Asaf Khan at a reduced price and to offer similar presents to his sister, who was won over to the side of the English. Through Asaf Khan's help, an interview was arranged with Khurram, and the Prince promised to obtain for Roe not only

a *farman* for Bengal but a 'general command and grant of free privileges in all the Mughal dominions.' A hope was also held out that the prince would make over the port of Surat to the English, when he assumed charge of the province of Gujarat. The Portuguese were great rivals of the English, and their intrigues hampered the British ambassador considerably in persuading the emperor to grant his terms. The draft of the treaty, which Roe submitted, was rejected with scorn, and it was after long delay and evasions that a *farman* was granted, allowing some concessions to the English. The prince adopted a friendly attitude towards the British merchants and informed them that in case they were attacked by the Portuguese, the local governor would assist them with boats and any other requisites. They were allowed to trade freely, and abuses of the customs houses were put an end to. No tolls were to be levied on goods entering into a port, and the merchants were permitted to hire any house they pleased for establishing a factory. They were to enjoy the right of self-government, and no English refugee was to be detained, even if he accepted the Muslim faith. The Mughal government was so distrustful of the intentions of the English that it did not allow them to build or buy a permanent house and fixed the number of Englishmen, who could wear arms in the city. Roe strongly objected to the insertion of the clause, and it was through his persistent remonstrances that it was dropped.

The grant of this *farman* is a landmark in the history of the English relations with India. Roe fought hard against adverse circumstances, and in the long run succeeded in partially gaining his object. His countrymen at Surat made light of his diplomatic services, but they overlooked the fact that though Sir Thomas Roe could not achieve what he desired he enhanced the prestige of the English in India and won respect for them at the Mughal court. The Portuguese

were humbled, and the provincial governors were asked to stay the hand of oppression, which resulted in giving time to the English to establish their influence on a secure basis.

Roe's Journal gives us a vivid picture of the court and faithful character sketches of all the prominent members of the royal family except Nurjahan whom he never saw. He dwells at length upon the pomp and magnificence, wealth and power of the Great Mughal, and describes the festivities and pleasure parties in which the grandees took part. But he does not forget to describe the squalor and misery of the peasantry, the insecurity of the public highways, and the general inefficiency and supineness of the local administrations. Corruption was prevalent, and the highest officers of the state were not above reproach. There was no written law in the country, and the king ruled by his word. The country was divided into provinces, but the imperial supervision over provinces was lax, and the provincial governors behaved as despots. The emperor was every man's heir, and by the law of Escheat the property of a noble passed to him. The great men about him were not men of noble birth, but favourites often raised to eminence by caprice. He describes Jahangir as a cheerful, amiable man, entirely free from pride and conceit. He praises the manner in which he was received at court, and goes on to add that no ambassador, Turkish or Persian, was ever received with so much courtesy. Roe was invited more than once to be present in the Durbar by Jahangir, and on one occasion he presented him with a picture, which the king greatly appreciated. Writing about court, the ambassador says that he witnessed interesting scenes of drunkenness and revelry during his visits at night. When the emperor became dead drunk, the lights were put out and the tipsy courtiers went away to their homes. At one of the drinking bouts Roe was offered liquor, but it was so strong that it made him sneeze on which the emperor laughed heartily

and enquired the reason thereof. Sir Thomas Roe was a dexterous diplomatist, endowed with plenty of natural shrewdness and business capacity, and his journal is full of interesting details about court life during Jahangir's reign.

The Deccan.

Akbar had captured the fort of Asirgarh, but he was obliged to leave suddenly for the north owing to Salim's rebellion. His departure seriously affected the Mughal position in the Deccan and nothing substantial was achieved by the imperialists. After the death of the emperor in 1605, when Jahangir succeeded to the throne, he resumed his father's policy, but he was confronted by a very able statesman and military leader in Malik Ambar, the Abyssinian minister and general of the Nizamshahi kings of Ahmadnagar.

Malik Ambar was not a man of ordinary talents. Possessed of rare intellectual powers and force of character, he was equally at home in civil and military affairs. Long experience of administrative work had ripened his judgment, and given him an insight into matters of high state policy, which had secured for him a position of considerable influence in the state. He had introduced several reforms, but the most notable of them was his organisation of the revenue system after the model followed by Raja Todarmal in the north. Even the Mughal historians who speak of him in terms of contempt praise him for his ability, political acumen, and resourcefulness in times of danger and difficulty. His activities were not confined to the civil administration alone. He was a general of no mean repute. He developed the military strength of the Nizamshahi kingdom, and revolutionised the methods of warfare in the Deccan. He was the first to train the Marathas in the guerilla method of warfare which they carried to perfection afterwards, and which greatly helped them in destroying the Mughal empire. To fight with such a formidable enemy

was no easy task, and Malik Ambar taxed to the uttermost the military resources of the empire for well-nigh two decades.

Malik Ambar speedily began to recover the lost territory, and sharply checked the Mughal advance, which was partly due also to the inaction of the officers themselves. To retrieve the position, Jahangir sent the Khan-i-Khanan at the head of a large force, consisting of 12,000 men, to carry on the war in the Deccan. The supreme command was entrusted to Prince Parwez, and with him were associated other military officers of renown. As no improvement in the situation was effected, the emperor despatched Khan Jahan Lodi, who was accompanied by several distinguished generals, both Hindu and Muslim. On reaching the Deccan, they came to know that the Mughals had been defeated by Ambar's men, and were compelled to beat a dishonourable retreat. The generals accused each other of bad plans and defective strategy, and Khan Jahan urged the recall of the Khan-i-Khanan. He implored the emperor to place him in chief command, and added that he would not show his face to the servants of the court, if he failed in the enterprise.[19] In the face of such opposition, the emperor considered it advisable to withdraw the Khan-i-Khanan from the scene of operations. With Khan Jahan as their chief commander, the Mughals assumed the offensive in full vigour in 1611, but they were forced to retreat towards Gujarat by the Maratha horsemen who inflicted heavy losses on them. On hearing the news of this mishap Jahangir himself resolved to go to the Deccan and 'destroy root and branch those servants, who had become masters,' but the nobles were not agreeable to the proposal. The Khan-i-Khanan was re-appointed to the command. Ever loyal to the empire in which he had risen to such eminence, the veteran warrior forgot past insults and injuries and proceeded

[19] R. B., I, pp. 179-80.

to the Deccan. He defeated the Deccanis in a hotly-contested engagement, but even this brilliant success failed to silence his enemies who accused him of having accepted the Deccan gold. Once again he was called back and the command was entrusted to Prince Khurram.

The prince marched to the Deccan *via* Ajmer and reached Burhanpur on March 6, 1617, accompanied by the most valiant imperial generals. He offered terms of peace to the enemy, which were immediately accepted. Adil Shah waited on the prince in person with presents worth 15 lakhs, and promised to restore all the territory which had been seized by Malik Ambar. The treaty was ratified by the emperor who bestowed the title of Farzand (son) upon Adil Khan, and expressed much satisfaction at his submission. The officers of the state who had taken part in the war were suitably rewarded, and Prince Khurram was given the title of Shahjahan, and his *mansab* was raised to 30,000 Zat and 20,000 *Sawar*. Other gifts followed, and as a mark of special honour the emperor himself came down from the Jharokha, and 'poured over his head a small tray of jewels and a tray of gold (coins).'[20] Wealth was heaped in abundance upon the prince, and his triumph was celebrated in the right Roman fashion.

Nurjahan Begum also shared in the rejoicings; she held a feast in honour of the prince, and conferred upon him dresses of honour and jewels, and pearls of great value. The total cost of this entertainment according to Jahangir was 3,00,000 rupees.[21] Behind all these profuse gifts and rewards lay the hard fact that the Deccan was not conquered, and that the spirit of Malik Ambar was as unbroken as ever.

[20] R. B., I, p. 395.

[21] R. B., I, p. 397.

The most remarkable exploit of Jahangir's reign is the conquest of the famous fortress of Kangra in November, 1620.

Conquest of Kangra.

The fort was situated on a lofty hill, and was strongly fortified by nature. It was surrounded by a number of fortresses which were in the possession of hill chiefs. Near by was the famous temple of Jwalamukhi at Nagarkot, where thousands of devotees came from all parts of the country to offer worship. The temple was plundered by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1009, but as soon as the whirlwind of his invasion was over, the Hindu Rajas of the Kangra region again recovered their lost power. Firuz Tughluq led an expedition to Kangra, but its natural fortifications baffled all his efforts, and he had to be content with the nominal homage of the local chieftain. During Akbar's reign, an attempt was made to conquer the fortress, but the imperial generals accomplished nothing though the siege lasted for a long time. When Jahangir came to the throne, he also thought of the conquest of Kangra. Murtaza Khan, governor of the Punjab, was appointed to the command, but his efforts failed owing to the jealousy and opposition of the Rajput chiefs who were associated with him. After some time he died, and Shahjahan was entrusted with the command of the expedition. The imperialists assumed the offensive in full vigour, and the hill chiefs were thoroughly humbled. The siege of Kangra was pushed on for weeks together; the supplies were cut off, and the beleaguered garrison had to live on boiled dry grass. Death and starvation stared them in the face. After a prolonged siege of 14 months, when they saw no hope of deliverance, they surrendered on November 16, 1620.[22]

[22] A full account of this campaign will be found in *Sash Fatah-i-Kangra* extracts from which are given in Elliot, VI, pp. 517—31.
The *Memoirs* also contain an account, R. B., II, pp. 183—85.
For a description of the fort see *Memoirs*, II, pp. 223-24.

Death of Khusrau.

Khusrau remained a solitary prisoner in his gloomy dungeon, and his soul sank under the accumulated weight of sorrow and misfortune. The ladies of the *haram*, moved to pity by the prince's miserable plight, requested the emperor that the repentant sinner deserved to be forgiven. Permission was given him to attend the Durbar in 1613, but Khusrau's appearance "showed no signs of openness and happiness and he was always mournful and dejected in mind." Nothing availed to brighten up his life which seemed to him a cheerless blank. The emperor cancelled his previous order in disgust, and forbade his entry into the Durbar.[23] Nurjahan's plans succeeded well enough, and in October, 1616, the hapless prince was entrusted to the custody of his mortal enemy Asaf Khan, who made him over to his rival Shahjahan.[24] The latter took him to the Deccan when he marched against Malik Ambar, the Abyssinian. Luckily peace was made, and the cessation of hostilities enabled Shahjahan to organize the territories under his control. As Khusrau was still popular, Shahjahan thought it prudent to remove him from his path. At Burhanpur, the prince was murdered by Shahjahan's order early in 1622, and the emperor was informed that he had died of colic pain.

There is no doubt that Shahjahan was the cause of Khusrau's death. Jahangir in his *Memoirs* gives us no clue to the tragic event and simply writes: 'At this time a report came from Khurram that Khusrau on the 8th (20th of the month) had died of the disease of colic pain (*Qulanj*), and gone to the mercy of God.[25] Several years ago Mr. Beveridge expressed the view that there was no evidence worthy of

[23] R. B., I, p. 261.

[24] R. B., I, p. 336.

[25] R. B., II, p. 228

the name, that Khusrau was murdered or strangled.[26] There is a mass of evidence to prove that Khusrau was killed by Shahjahan's orders. Besides the testimony of the later Muslim chroniclers and European travellers there is contemporary evidence which holds Shahjahan responsible for the crime.

The murdered prince was liked by all classes of men, and Terry writes of him :

> " For that prince, he was a gentleman of a very lovely presence and fine carriage, so exceedingly beloved of the common people, that as Sætonius writes of Titus, he was *amor et deliciæ*, etc., the very love and delight of them, aged then about thirty-five years. He was a man who contented himself with one wife, who with all love and care accompanied him in all his straits, and therefore he would never take any wife but herself, though the liberty of his religion did admit of his plurality."

Khusrau was given a second burial. By the command of his father, whose wrath seems to have been allayed in the awful presence of death, his remains were conveyed to Allahabad, where they were interred by the side of his mother in a garden near Khuldabad. The walled garden known as Khusrau Bagh still stands in its melancholy grandeur to remind the visitor of those unhappy events which led to the tragic end of the prince, who has been rightly described as one of the most interesting and pathetic figures in Indian history.

Shahjahan's rebellion.

As has been said before, Nurjahan's backstair intrigues had driven Shahjahan into revolt. His hostility to the imperious Begum was no longer a secret, and it was known to all that the prince would have to take prompt action, if he wished to

26 J. R. A. S., 1907, p. 599.

safeguard his person and property. Both sides prepared themselves for an armed conflict. Shahjahan had several prominent nobles to back up his cause, while Nurjahan could count on the loyalty of veteran officers like Asaf Khan, Mahabat Khan, and chiefs like the princes of Ambar, Marwar, Kota, Bundi, and Raja Bir Singh Bundela, the murderer of Abul Fazl, along with several others. The entire military and financial resources of the empire were at her disposal, and even the supporters of the prince felt that their patron had embarked upon a hazardous enterprise.

The first decisive battle between the imperialists and Shahjahan was fought at Bilochpur to the south of Delhi (1623) in which the rebels were defeated. Raya Rayan Raja Bikramajit,[27] the gallant soldier, whose valour had been proved in many an arduous campaign, fell in battle, and his head was cut off by the imperialists. It was sent to Jahangir who is reported to have expressed much gratification at the death of such a deadly enemy. Shahjahan was pursued by the imperialists, and skirmishes took place between him and Mahabat's troops. The situation was deemed so serious that Jahangir himself proceeded to Ajmer to direct the campaign in person. The prince betook himself to Asir, which he captured without striking a blow, but desertions in his army filled him with anxiety. He turned to Malik Ambar for help but the latter returned a curt refusal. Pressed hard by the imperialists, he crossed the Tapti, although it was in heavy floods, and sought refuge in Golkunda. But the Sultan of Golkunda offered him no help, and asked him to quit his country without delay. Greatly disappointed, the prince marched across Telingana into Orissa which was a Mughal province. He reduced the whole of Bengal and Bihar and

[27] He was deputy of Shahjahan and was once appointed viceroy of Gujarat by him. He was known as Sundar. This is Brahman Sundar.

brought them under his sway. Master of a valuable province, he attempted to seize Oudh and Allahabad, but he encountered stubborn resistance at the hands of the imperial garrison. When valour proved unavailing, treachery was employed. The Zamindars who had espoused the prince's cause were made to desert him by means of bribes and deceitful representations. Reduced to sore straits, Shahjahan made one more desperate attempt to beat the enemy, but he was severely defeated. He retreated hastily to the fortress of Rohtas and thence proceeded to the Deccan.

Malik Ambar, the old enemy of the empire, who was waging war against Bijapur, and who had just stormed the fort of Sholapur, accorded a cordial welcome to the fugitive prince, and formed an alliance with him against the emperor. Shahjahan laid siege to Burhanpur, but he abandoned it when Parwez and Mahabat Khan appeared on the scene. He retired to Rohangarh, and his valiant general Abdullah Khan renounced the world and buried himself in penance and prayer.

Shahjahan found himself in an unfortunate predicament. It was difficult for him to make headway against the imperialists with their undoubted superiority in numbers in spite of Ambar's alliance. His generals had gone over to the side of the enemy, and Abdullah on whose fidelity he could always count had taken to the life of a recluse and a hermit. It is true he still held the forts of Rohtas in the north and Asir in the Deccan, but these could hardly stand a prolonged and concentrated siege by the imperialists. Reduced to sore straits, Shahjahan saw nothing but failure staring him in the face. He wrote to Jahangir to forgive his unfilial conduct. Nurjahan, who feared Mahabat's growing influence and his alliance with Parwez, readily grasped at the opportunity, and agreed to the proposal advanced by the rebellious prince (March, 1626). He was asked to surrender the forts of Rohtas

and Asir, and as a guarantee of his good behaviour he was to send his two sons Dara and Aurangzeb, boys of ten and eight respectively, to court as hostages. Shahjahan made due obeisance to the royal *farman* and offered rich gifts valued at ten lakhs of rupees. He himself repaired to Nasik with his wife and his youngest son Murad.

Mahabat Khan.

It will be remembered that Nurjahan was anxious to secure the succession for her son-in-law Shahariyar. He was a good-for-nothing mediocrity, but the death of Khusrau and the humiliation of Shahjahan once again encouraged the empress to revive her plans. The only other rival was Parwez, who was at this time closely associated with Mahabat Khan, the most redoubtable general and diplomatist of the empire. It is easy to imagine what Mahabat could do with Parwez as a tool in his hands, particularly when the emperor was rendered incapable of exertion by continued ill-health. Nurjahan kept quiet as long as Mahabat's services were needed to cope with Khurram's rebellion, but the moment it was suppressed she renewed her intrigues and attempted to deprive Mahabat Khan of all power and influence. He was asked to resign the imperial command and to go over to Bengal to assume charge of the governorship of that province. Prince Parwez expressed his unwillingness to allow him to go and Nurjahan issued an order in wrath that Mahabat Khan must return to court and the prince should stay at Burhanpur. Fearing his brother's fate Parwez yielded and Mahabat Khan also bowed to the royal command.

Nurjahan did not rest content with the recall of Mahabat. She had the audacity to bring against him charges of embezzlement and corruption. A royal message required him to send to court the elephants he had seized in Bengal and to account for the moneys which had come into his hands by reason of the dismissal of fief-holders. Another charge the preposterousness

of which is obvious was that Mahabat had affianced his daughter without royal permission to the son of Khwaja 'Umar Nakshabandi. The emperor disapproved of the betrothal, sent for the young man, and treated him with studied insults. His hands were tied to his neck and he was escorted bareheaded to prison. An officer of the crown, Fidai Khan, was deputed to bring to the imperial exchequer all the wealth which had been given by Mahabat to his prospective son-in-law. Failing this, he was asked to send him to court. Mahabat was mortally offended by this outrageous treatment. It brought into clear relief the baneful results of petticoat influence in affairs of great pith and moment, and strengthened the general's convictions regarding the inefficiency of the present *régime*. Jahangir was too enfeebled in health to look into these matters, and blindly assented to the wishes of his imperious wife. Mahabat was taken aback, as any man would have been in his position, by the ingratitude shown by the powers-that-be in dealing with him. As he looked back to his relations with Nurjahan in the past, a moment's reflection convinced him that his life and honour were in peril, and that nothing short of a drastic and timely move could save him from imminent ruin. Fully prepared for any contingency, Mahabat collected four or five thousand Rajputs and started for court.

The emperor had just returned from Kashmir, and after a few months' stay at Lahore started for Kabul in March, 1626. He was encamped on the bank of the Jhelam when Mahabat arrived with his sturdy and well-armed Rajputs. How was he to secure his position? He could only do so by seizing the emperor and weaning him completely away from the sinister influence of Nurjahan and Asaf Khan. When the emperor's party was to cross the Jhelam, Mahabat Khan came quietly with his men, and surrounded the imperial camp and made His Majesty a captive.

Nurjahan whom the general was anxious to catch crossed the bridge on the Jhelam in disguise, and escaped his clutches. Shahariyar, too, disappeared in the confusion that followed Mahabat's coup. Nurjahan, on reaching the other bank, called a council of war to devise means of releasing the emperor. She rebuked her brother Asaf Khan and said to him: "All this has happened through your neglect and stupid arrangements. What never entered into the imagination of any one has come to pass, and now you stand stricken with shame for your conduct before God and man. You must do your best to repair the evil, and advise what course to pursue." There could be but one answer to this passionate reproach. All agreed with her that they should go to the other bank to overpower Mahabat and release the emperor from his custody.

When Jahangir heard of this resolution, he felt anxious for his own position. The Mughals were no match to the Rajputs who could easily give them a short shrift in open battle. They were well armed and disciplined, and it was an act of utter folly to go to fight against them. Messages were exchanged with the emperor who tried to dissuade his adherents from attack, but they paid no heed to his advice. Fidai Khan's dash to rescue the emperor failed, but his example served to inflame the ardour of the imperialists. Next morning they resolved on attack come what might. Nurjahan's masculine qualities shone to their fullest advantage in this hour of crisis. Regardless of her own life, the high-spirited lady attempted to cross the river on the back of an elephant, with the infant daughter of Shahariyar in her arms. But the ford proved a treacherous one. It contained several deep pits in which men were drowned so that "all order was lost, and each party got over as best it could." On the other side of the river of the Rajputs who were lined in battle array discharged their arrows at the imperialists. The great need of

the hour was to cross to the opposite bank and keep off the enemy, but the greatest confusion prevailed, and the panic-stricken officers rushed off in disorder, not knowing whither they went, or where they led their men.

Nurjahan behaved with extraordinary courage and coolness in this crisis, but her men could offer only feeble resistance to organised and disciplined Rajput valour. The imperialists lost their nerves and fled in all directions. Asaf Khan himself sought refuge in the fort of Attock with nearly 3,000 soldiers, some camp followers, and attendants. Such was the courage of the most exalted grandee of the empire.

The Begum had no option but to surrender to Mahabat who allowed her to join her husband in captivity. Mahabat Khan's ascendancy was fully established, and there was none to dispute his authority in the empire. A punitive force was sent against Asaf Khan who surrendered without much opposition. Though a prisoner in the hands of Mahabat, Nurjahan busied herself in devising means of escape from the clutches of her captors and finally succeeded in the attempt. Mahabat Khan was asked to proceed to Thatta to counteract the plans of Shahjahan who had gone in the same direction. The general turned off in the direction of Hindustan, where he hoped 'to push his fortune.' But he was rendered powerless by the royal party which plundered the rich convoy of treasure he had received from Bengal to aid him in his plans.

After Mahabat's recall, Nurjahan appointed Khan jahan Lodi to the Deccan command, but he was no match to Malik Ambar and would have suffered heavy losses, had not the latter died in May, 1626. Malik Ambar's death was an irreparable blow to the Nizamshahi dynasty. The official chronicler, who is in no way partial to the Abyssinian, writes of him: 'Ambar was a slave, but an able man. In warfare, in command, in sound judgment, and in administration, he had no rival or equal.

End of the Deccan Wars.

He well understood that predatory warfare, which in the language of the Dakhin is called *bargi giri*. He kept down the turbulent spirits of that country, and maintained his exalted position to the end of his life, and closed his career in honour. History records no other instance of an Abyssinian slave arriving at such eminence.[28]

War broke out again in the Deccan and went on for some time with varying fortunes. Ambar's place was taken by another slave Hāmid Khan, who was equally able and unscrupulous. The imperial commandant Khan Jahan accepted a huge bribe from Hāmid and left to him the whole country of Balaghat as far as Ahmadnagar. Jahangir's Deccan policy had miserably failed.

When Shahjahan heard of Mahabat's revolt in the Deccan, he marched towards the north and reached Thatta in Sindh. He tried to capture the fort which was ably defended by the governor who was a supporter of Nurjahan. Foiled in these attempts, he thought of going to Persia, but he was too fatigued by his ceaseless marches to start on such a long and arduous journey.

Shahjahan's movements.

Once more he went to the Deccan, disappointed and crest-fallen, and was obliged by ill-health to travel in a palanquin. The route followed by him was the same as adopted by Mahmud of Ghazni, when he marched against the temple of Somnath in Kathiawad.

Meanwhile Mahābat's treasure had been plundered by the imperialists. Deprived of his money, he betook himself to the Deccan. There he concluded an alliance with Shahjahan which was cemented by rich presents and gifts on both sides.

The emperor's health was now completely shattered.

28 Iqbalnamah, Elliot, VI, pp. 428-29.

Death of Jahangir.

On his return journey from Kashmir whither he had gone with Nurjahan and Asaf Khan in March, 1627, he stopped at Bairamkala[29] to indulge his love of sports. The death of an unfortunate foot-soldier here stirred him to his deepest depths. He lost his peace of mind and felt as if he had seen the angel of death. The cleverest physicians failed to effect a cure. Towards the close of day he sent for a glass of wine, but was unable to send it down his throat. During the night his condition grew worse, and he expired early in the next morning on October 28, 1627.

The question of succession.

Who was now to succeed to the throne? Parwez, who had become a hopeless decrepit at the early age of 37, had died of excessive drink in October, 1626. Shahriyar was still alive, and with a few other princes of the royal family might be a serious rival of Shahjahan. Soon after the emperor's death Asaf Khan sent a courier named Banārasi with his signet ring to the Deccan to inform Shahjahan of the sad event. Meanwhile Asaf's natural diplomacy suggested to him a means of easing the situation. He brought out of prison Dāwarbakhsh, son of the ill-fated Khusrau, and proclaimed him emperor. Nurjahan made frantic efforts to see her brother, but the latter evaded her on one pretext or another. After this, the funeral rites of the emperor were performed, and he was buried in Shāhdarā near Lahore in the Dilkusha garden of Nurjahan. The devoted lady afterwards erected a mausoleum, which lies in the open without a dome in obedience to the wish of her husband, who was a great lover of natural beauty.

While the body of the emperor was being interred at Shāhdarā, the fate of the empire hung in the balance. Nur-

29 Bairamkala is now known as Bahramgulla. It was the emperor's hunting ground on the Kashmir route.

jahan had sent word to Shahriyar to make a bold bid for the throne. He was egged on by his wife to proclaim himself emperor at Lahore and to seize the royal treasure. This he did, and his efforts were seconded by one of the sons of Prince Dānyal. Asaf Khan did his best to thwart the plans of Shahriyar and marched towards Lahore at the head of a considerable force. Lahore was besieged, and the craven-hearted protégé of Nurjahan surrendered without resistance. He was thrown into prison and blinded.

Shahjahan, on receiving the news, hurried towards the north, and sent a *farman* to Asaf Khan that all his rivals 'should be sent out of the world.' Anxious to secure the position of his son-in-law, the wily minister readily carried out his behest and rid him of all his rivals. This being done, Shahjahan made his state entry into the capital on January 24, 1628. In recognition of his great services Asaf Khan was loaded with honours and distinctions ; he was created Yamīn-ud-dowlah and his rank was raised to 8,000 *Zat* and 8,000 *Sawar*. Great honours awaited him in the future, and he lived to reach the summit of official greatness in the Mughal empire.

Nurjahan retired from public life. Although she had plotted and intrigued against Shahjahan, the latter treated her well and granted her a pension of two lakhs a year. Now she gave up all luxury and enjoyment and dressed in plain white cloth, passed her days in sorrow at Lahore, her only companion being her daughter, the widow of Shahriyar. She died on Shawwal 29, 1055 A.H. (December 8, 1645) and was buried beside her husband in the mausoleum which had been built by her.

Personality of Jahangir.

Jahangir is one of the most interesting figures in Mughal history. The ordinary view that he was a sensual pleasure-seeker and a callous tyrant does him less than justice. All accounts agree that he was intelligent, shrewd, and capable of understanding the most complex problems of the state without any

difficulty. Though not so great in intellect and character as his illustrious father, he had unconsciously imbibed the influences which surrounded him in early youth. The brilliant court of Akbar to which flocked the greatest wits, philosophers, religious leaders, statesmen and generals from all parts of India and Central Asia could not fail to leave its impress upon the ductile mind of the prince. He acquired much practical knowledge though he had never shown the assiduity of a pupil.

He had no cabinet or council to guide him. He acted as his own guide in matters of state and was utterly intolerant of opposition. No minister could browbeat or deflect him from the course he had fixed for himself. He was an enthusiastic hunter, a fine shot, and a capable general who could plan and lead military campaigns, though in later life he lost much of the physical vigour and hardihood which had characterised him in his early days. As he advanced in age, the old impetuosity of his temper was sobered down, and his outlook was modified by the appreciation of the responsibilities of his exalted office.

He was stern in administering justice and put down tyranny with a high hand. Law and order were not neglected even in the remote parts of the empire as is shown by his efforts to suppress the Sewras in Gujarat. Punishments were often severe, and in important cases that called for redress the emperor himself intervened. Capital punishment was not rashly or hastily carried out.

When an order for the execution of a culprit was issued, the officers were required to wait till sunset before putting him to death. Though fair-minded and considerate to a degree, Jahangir was subject to great paroxysms of rage, and one writer who failed to understand his contradictory qualities describes him as the " mixture of opposites." He was needlessly cruel at times and inflicted punishments entirely disproportionate to

the offences committed. But it would be wrong to conclude that he had a thirst for bloodshed, or that he took delight in tormenting the human species. There is evidence to prove that he was highly generous and charitable. He rewarded merit and faithful service most suitably, and the *Memoirs* relate numerous instances of his benevolence and goodwill. 'A slight claim of service is a great thing with us,' he used to say, and men of all grades and vocations were honoured by him, when he was convinced of their loyalty or worth. He was kind to the poor and was pleased to bestow gifts on them. He held saints in great esteem, and freely associated with Hindu Yogis and talked to them, as is illustrated by his several visits to Jadrūp, the famous Hindu ascetic of Ujjain. On one occasion at Ajmer he fed 5,000 people to their hearts' content and then distributed money with his own hand.[30]

He possessed a warm and affectionate heart ; towards his kinsmen he behaved with kindness, although he ruthlessly punished their political offences. But in every case he gave an opportunity of repentance and correction. Though disobedient during his lifetime, Jahangir speaks of his father in terms of great reverence and lovingly dwells on the excellence of his character. More than once he walked barefooted to the sepulchre at Sikandara and dutifully offered homage.[31] He was a doting father and devoted husband. He forgave his sons for their treason, and if Khusrau's fate was tragic, the

[30] R. B., I, p. 256.

Once he gave to faqirs and deserving people 44,786 bighas of land and two entire villages, with 320 ass-loads of grain from Kashmir and seven ploughs of land in Kabul. R. B., II, p. 84 .

[31] Referring to the tomb he says : 'I rubbed the head of supplication on the threshold, the abode of angels, and presented 100 *muhurs* as *nazar*.' R. B., I, p. 101.

blame does not rest wholly with the emperor. Shahjahan's rebellion greatly mortified him, and the pathetic lament in which he bemoans his undutiful behaviour is the outpouring of the gentle heart of an injured parent. To Nurjahan he was passionately attached. No misunderstanding or mistrust ever marred the happiness of their conjugal relations, and the empress continued to be to the day of his death his greatest friend and guide. He allowed her to share with him the sovereignty of Hindustan, and never heeded the protests made against her ascendancy by her enemies.

These noble qualities of his character Jahangir owed in no small measure to his education. He had learnt a great deal of Persian literature and made himself an adept in the art of composition. He could speak Turki although he could not write it. He took delight in Hindi songs and munificently rewarded Hindi poets. He loved poetry and himself composed odes. Besides the cultivation of *belles lettres* he interested himself in a number of other subjects. He studied history, geography and biography, and his intimate knowledge of the flora and fauna of Kashmir and other parts of Hindustan will cause surprise to a naturalist in these days. Anyone who reads his *Memoirs* will be convinced of his power of expression, his scientific spirit, his inquisitiveness and the accuracy of his observations.

The glories of Agra in Akbar's day had developed his æsthetic faculties also. He loved architecture and painting and discussed the good and bad points of a work of art with the confidence of a professional connoisseur. Painters were generously rewarded at his court. They received titles from him and considered it an honour if he condescended to scan with care their productions.

But these noble qualities were to some extent neutralised by his habit of drink. He had never tasted liquor until he was 15 years of age. He began it in youth, and as he advanced

in years, the appetite grew by what it fed on. His potions during nine years rose to 20 cups of doubly distilled liquor, fourteen of which he drank during the daytime, and the remainder at night. Later, he reduced his potions and observed the highest decorum during the day. But intemperance affected his health to such an extent that he could not drink with his own hand and had to be helped by others.

This evil habit contracted in early youth stuck to him to the end of his life. Once he resolved to abstain from liquor altogether, but he could not keep his vow. His constitution was completely undermined, but it must be said to his credit that he behaved with greater decency than Murad, Dānyal and Parwez, who had all died of excessive drink.

Another weakness which seriously interfered with the efficiency of the administration was his willingness to allow himself to be controlled by others. Nurjahan and Asaf Khan dominated him so completely that he delegated all his powers and functions to them, and accepted their decisions without reservation. Love of ease and indifference to public business made him more and more indolent until he lost the capacity for prompt and energetic action. The decline of his physical and mental vigour was the chief cause of two formidable rebellions of the reign.

It is sometimes asked what was Jahangir's religion. Was he an orthodox Sunni or an eclectic pantheist like his father? It is not easy to state his positive religious beliefs. The opinion which his contemporaries formed of him was strongly coloured by their own predilections. Some looked upon him as an atheist, or an eclectic, or a devout Muslim, while others thought that he believed in the Christian gospel. There were yet others who considered him to be a mocker at all religions after the fashion of Voltaire. None of these opinions is wholly true.

Though pledged to maintain Sunni orthodoxy, he never persecuted the Shias or Hindus. It was impossible for a man like him, nurtured amidst the most liberal influences, to subscribe to a dogma or creed. But he retained intact his faith in God, and said his prayers like a Muslim. He took a keen interest in the teachings of Vedānta and Sufism and found delight in the company of those who were conversant with them. Still he was not loth to punish those who interfered with orthodox Sunnism. Once when he came to know that certain Muslims had become attached to a Sannyāsī, whose words made a great impression upon them, he laid his hands heavily on them and enforced the Divine Law.[32]

He had a feeling of contempt for the Hindu religion of which he knew little. Once at Ajmer he caused the image of Vārāha, the boar *avatārā* of the Hindus, to be broken and thrown into the tank. Again on visiting the temple of Jvālāmukhī at Kangra in 1622 he observed: 'A world has here wandered in the desert of error.' He held the Christians in esteem and allowed them to preach their religion in his dominions. He adhered to his father's policy of *Sulh-i-Kul* (Peace unto all) and tried, except in a few cases, to give effect to the policy of religious toleration.

Jahangir as revealed in the *Memoirs* is a typical autocrat, a warm-hearted friend and generous patron, a lover of nature and its wonderful beauty, a cherisher of ease and indolence with faults and virtues strangely intermixed. Unlike his great ancestor Babar, he is a lover of things Indian, and feels delight in Indian surroundings. There is much in his character that deserves to be condemned, but there is a great deal that entitles him to be placed among the most fascinating personalities of Indian History.

Shahjahan was the third son of the emperor Jahangir.

[32] R. B., I, p. 171.

He was born of the Rajput princess Jagat Gosain in 1592, when his grandfather Akbar was still alive.[33] Akbar had a great liking for Khurram as he was then called, and considered him superior to the other sons of Jahangir. The prince was given a liberal education such as his high station deserved, and in a short time stored his mind with plenty of useful knowledge. He was naturally possessed of a strong will and character, and while the other princes drank hard and indulged in debauch, Prince Khurram enjoyed a reputation for being a total abstainer from alcohol. Since Khusrau had lost favour with the emperor and Parwez was a brainless and sottish mediocrity, the world looked upon Khurram as the future emperor of Hindustan. Circumstances strengthened the belief that Jahangir intended Khurram to be treated as the heir-apparent to the throne. In 1607 the prince's *mansab* was raised to 8,000 *Zat* and 5,000 *Sawar* and a year later the *sarkar* of Hisar Firoza was conferred upon him. Three years later the emperor signified his goodwill by raising his rank to 10,000 *Zat* and 5,000 *Sawar*. When the Prince grew to man's estate he was married in April, 1612, to Arjumand Banu Begum, better known to fame as Mumtaz Mahal or the lady of the Taj, who was the daughter of Asaf Khan, one of the noblest grandees of the empire. It was a time when Nurjahan was fast rising into prominence. The astute lady soon formed an alliance with Khurram, who seemed to be a formidable rival,

Review of Shahjahan's Early Career.

[33] She was the daughter of Raja Udaya Singh of Marwar. Prince Khurram was born on the last day of Rabi I in the year 1000 A.H. (January 4, 1592) at Lahore. Abul Fazl says in the 36th year of Akbar's reign and the year 1000 A. H. a son was born to Salim of the daughter of Mota Raja. Rejoicings and festivities were performed and the prince was christened Sultan Khurram, *i.e.*, 'Joyous.'

Akbarnamah, III, p. 603.

for the furtherance of her ambitious projects. To win him to her side, she persuaded the emperor in 1617 to raise the prince's *mansab* to 30,000 *Zat* and 20,000 *Sawar*, an honour usually reserved for men whom his Majesty especially delighted to honour. He had distinguished himself in the Mewar campaign against the Rajputs, and had succeeded in dictating terms to the valiant Abyssinian who had long defied the imperial generals. These successes, gained in difficult regions against heavy odds, convinced Jahangir of the prince's aptitude for military generalship, and, to mark his pleasure, he bestowed upon him the title of Shahjahan, and allotted to him a chair near the throne in the Durbar—a favour which Shahjahan afterwards extended to his son Dara Shukoh. It was a lucky moment in Khurram's life. The emperor heartily lavished his affection on him and loaded him with honours and distinctions.

But a dark shadow cast its gloom on the prince's career. Jealous of his growing fame, Nurjahan wished to oust him from the throne, and began secretly to push forward Shahriyar, her son-in-law. When Khurram learnt of her secret design, he refused to go to Qandhar whither the emperor had ordered him to proceed, and broke out into open rebellion. The empire was convulsed by this unhappy event, and Jahangir was grieved at the unfilial behaviour of the most promising of his sons. A slave to the voluptuous woman who now wielded the sceptre of Hindustan, he did nothing to remove the just grievance of Khurram, and readily believed what she told him. War began, but the prince was soon tired of resisting the might and majesty of the empire, and offered an apology to the emperor, which was readily accepted.

Jahangir's health was rapidly declining, and Nurjahan knew that her supremacy would come to an end, if she did not stir betimes to exclude Shahjahan from the succession. It was a highly dangerous move, but the ambitious lady found

it impossible to reconcile herself to Shahjahan, whom she knew to be both able and unscrupulous. After Jahangir's death in October, 1627, she formed a definite plan to give effect to her wishes. She put forward Shahriyar as her candidate for the throne in the belief that he would be a pliable instrument in her hands, while Asaf Khan pressed the claims of Shahjahan, and by every means in his power tried to obtain recognition for them. Once more Nurjahan, whose inordinate love of power blinded her to the most obvious prudential considerations, decided to plunge the empire into the throes of a civil war. What did it matter to her imperious nature, if blood was shed in profusion and the treasure of the state wasted in abundance to back the claims of an imbecile aspirant to the throne? Luckily Asaf Khan successfully checkmated his sister's plans, and made the field clear for his son-in-law by removing his rivals from the path. The princes of the royal family were butchered without ruth, and many of their partisans and supporters were killed. Some of the royal ladies who were deeply affected by these ghastly tragedies ended their lives by committing suicide. Truly, Shahjahan waded to the throne through the blood of his own kinsmen, and this will ever remain an indelible stain on his memory. He formally ascended the throne on February 6, 1628, and assumed the title of Abul Muzaffar Shihab-ud-din Muhammad Sahib-i-Qiran II Shahjahan Badshah Ghazi. The *Khutba* was read, and the coins were struck in his name, and Nurjahan was asked with becoming dignity to quit the political field. All coins bearing her name were immediately withdrawn. Odes and panegyrics were showered upon the new emperor by literary wits and others from far and wide. The ceaseless round of festivities and the grant of liberal promotions and rewards to the nobility proclaimed to the world amidst the beat of drums that a new era had begun in the history of the Mughal dynasty.

The chronicler of the reign, Abdul Hamīd Lahori, highly praises Shahjahan's orthodoxy, and writes that soon after his accession he devoted his attention to 'the strengthening of the foundations of the Law of the Prophet, which was in a state of decline.' The first imperial decree consequently modified the calendar. The solar computation was looked upon by the orthodox as a religious innovation بدعت and was therefore stopped. All official events and transactions were to be recorded according to lunar years, and preference was to be given to the Hijri era. The *Sijdah* (prostration) which had been in vogue during the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir was discontinued, because the new emperor regarded it as contrary to the *Shariyat*. Mahabat Khan Khan-i-Khanan, one of the leading nobles, urged that *Zamīnbos* (kissing the ground) might be substituted for the *Sijdah*, for it was necessary to maintain the distinction between the sovereign and subject, the patron and client, and the noble and the humble, on which the stability of the state depended. The emperor agreed to this, and ordered that they should touch the ground with their right hand and then kiss its back as a mark of obeisance.[34] The Saiyyids of high rank, learned men, pious saints, and those who had taken to solitude for prayer and meditation were exempted from this mode of salutation. But after some time it was felt that the *Zamīnbos* also resembled the *Sijdah*, and therefore it was abolished. Its place was taken by the *Chahār taslīm*.[35]

Early measures of Shahjahan.

[34] Abdul Hamīd (Padshahnama, Biblioth. Ind., I, p. 112) says that they were to touch the ground with both hands, but Amin Qazwini (All. U. MS., f. 35b) who compiled the history of the first ten years of the reign writes that only the right hand دست راست was to touch the ground.

[35] Abdul Hamīd, Biblioth. Ind., I, p. 112.
The *Chahār taslīm* literally means 'four bows.'

The city of Agra was renamed Akbarabad in honour of his grandfather for whom Shahjahan always cherished a deep regard. Certain changes were effected also in the administration of the provinces of the empire.

The nobles and grandees of the empire were munificently rewarded, and generosity was shown even towards opponents. Asaf Khan became the recipient of unparalleled honours and dignities. His *mansab* was raised to 8,000 *Zat* and 8,000 *Sawar*, and he was given the title of uncle (عم) as a special mark of royal favour. With characteristic ardour the emperor devoted himself to the business of the state, and looked minutely into the details of administration. He began his reign well, and his reactionary tendencies in religious matters gladdened the hearts of the orthodox party which had been neglected by the state for more than half a century.

Soon after the coronation of the emperor, the peace of the realm was disturbed for a short time by the rebellion of the Bundela clan. The Bundelas had risen to power and fame under Bir Singh Deva, the murderer of Akbar's famous minister Abul Fazl, on whom Jahangir had lavishly bestowed honours and jagirs. The lax supervision of the central government towards the close of Jahangir's reign enabled the Bundela chieftain to increase his power and riches by blackmailing his neighbours who patiently endured the wrongs inflicted on them by the imperial *protégé*. After Bir Singh's death in 1627, his vast wealth and possessions passed to his son Jujhār Singh, who gave offence to Shahjahan by leaving the capital without permission. According to Qazwinī he felt afraid lest he should be called upon to account for his misdemeanours, and this led him to entertain evil fancies. Knowing full well that his country was inaccessible, and that he had considerable money and forces at his disposal, he found no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that he could

The Bundela Rebellion, 1628 A.D.

easily defy the Mughal power. Abdul Hamīd Lahori writes that "the wealth and property which Bir Singh had amassed without labour and without trouble unsettled the mind of his worthless successor Jujhār, and at the accession of Shahjahan . . . . he left the capital Agra and proceeded to Undcha (Orcha), his stronghold where he set about raising forces, strengthening the forts, providing munitions of war and closing the roads."

Shahjahan lost no time in making preparations to deal with the rebels. The imperial army marched against him from three directions. Mahabat Khan Khan-i-Khanan started at the head of 10,000 horse, 2,000 musketeers and 500 sappers, and he was assisted by Saiyyid Muzaffar Khan of Bārha, Raja Ram Das of Gwalior, Habib Khan Sūr and many other feudatories and mansabdars of high rank. As the Khan-i-Khanan was a man of headstrong and irritable temper, the emperor associated with him in command Islam Khan with a view to maintain harmony among the generals. Khanjahan proceeded from Malwa *via* Chanderi at the head of 8,000 horse, 2,000 musketeers and 5,000 sappers, and he was also assisted by Hindu chiefs and mansabdars of the state. Another contingent consisting of 7,000 horse, 2,000 musketeers and 500 sappers under Firoz Jung, the fief-holder of Kanauj, marched into Bundelkhand from the east. The entire royal force, including Asaf Khan's cavalry, consisted of 27,000 horse, 6,000 foot, and 1,500 musketeers. Jujhār Singh, who had hopelessly miscalculated the situation, was frightened out of his wits at the sight of this army. He made desperate efforts to avert the disaster but in vain. His fort was captured, and in the battle nearly two or three thousand of his men were slain. At last he offered submission, and presented himself before the emperor. He was required to pay 1,000 gold *muhars* as present and 15 lakhs of rupees as fine, and had to yield 40 elephants. He was allowed to retain as much *jagir* as would

enable him to enjoy the rank of 4,000 *Zat* and 4,000 *Sawar*, and the rest was distributed among Khanjahan Lodi, Abdulla Khan, Saiyyid Muzaffar Khan, and Raja Pahār Singh Bundela. Jujhār Singh was ordered to keep in readiness 2,000 cavalry and 2,000 infantry to aid the Deccan expedition of the emperor.

Khanjahan Lodi's Rebellion.

Another rebellion which deserves to be noticed was that of Khanjahan Lodi in the second year of the reign.[36] He had counted on the uncertainty of succession to the throne after Jahangir's death, but Shahjahan's rapid and triumphant march from Ajmer to Agra convinced him of the futility of his intentions, and he implored forgiveness. His offence was pardoned, and a royal *farman* confirmed him in the governorship of the Deccan. After some time he was summoned to court, but it was found that he still harboured mischievous designs.

For seven or eight months he remained at court, and was treated well by the emperor, but he always remained gloomy and dejected, and found no pleasure in the life of the court. He was terribly affrighted when a certain stupid royal officer informed his sons that they would be thrown into prison along with their father in a short time. At Asaf Khan's suggestion, the emperor issued a letter of assurance bearing his own signature, but nothing served to allay Khanjahan's suspicions. He was alarmed for his safety and once again sought refuge in flight.

The emperor despatched Hindu and Muslim generals to deal with him, and they overtook him near Dholpur. But

[36] Khanjahan Lodi was originally called Pir Khan Lodi. He was the second son of Daulat Khan Lodi, one of Akbar's officers. Abdul Hamīd contemptuously calls him Pira. He was an able man. His military talents won him the title of Salābat Khan. In 1608 he became Khanjahan and was promoted to the rank of 5,000. He was sent by Jahangir to fight in the Deccan. ...

Khanjahan hastily crossed the Chambal, and, passing through the Bundela country and Gondwana, proceeded to the Deccan, where he joined his old friend and ally Nizamulmulk. The imperialists followed him thither and defeated him in a number of skirmishes. But Khanjahan was still as undaunted as ever. He turned back, and crossing the Narbada reached the outskirts of Ujjain, where he engaged himself in plundering the inhabitants. The imperialists again drove him into the Bundela country, where a well-contested engagement was fought in which both sides suffered heavy losses. Khanjahan fled to Kalanjar, but there also he suffered a defeat at the hands of the local *qiladar*. In great despair he betook himself to Tal Sehonda,[37] where the final encounter took place in which he was completely defeated by the imperialists. His head was cut off and sent to the imperial court. The same fate was shared by nearly a hundred of his followers. The heads of the victims were suspended from the gate of the fort to serve as a warning to other like-minded miscreants in the country. Abdulla and Muzaffar, the imperial generals, who had acquitted themselves with great distinction in tedious and ceaseless campaigns, were fitly rewarded by the emperor for their patience, courage and endurance. Abdulla's *mansab* was raised to 6,000 *Zat* and 6,000 *Sawar*, and the lofty title of Firoz Jung was conferred upon him. Muzaffar's services, too, were duly recognised; he was promoted to the rank of 5,000 *Zat* and 5,000 *Sawar* and became the recipient of the title of Khanjahan.

The feast of Nauroz, 1628.

In the month of Rajab Shahjahan held the feast of Nauroz with great pomp and splendour. A magnificent canopy was constructed in the courtyard of the *Daulat Khana*, and the ground was covered with carpets of variegated hues. No effort was

37 It is north of Kalanjar on the bank of the river Ken.

spared in making the place look grand and beautiful. The four princes stood on the four corners of the throne, and Asaf Khan and other nobles occupied the places allotted to them. The emperor made liberal gifts to the members of the royal family. He gave fifty lakhs to Mumtaz Mahal, twenty lakhs to Jahanara Begum, five lakhs to Raushanara Begum, and five lakhs to each of the princes. Asaf Khan's *mansab* was raised to 9,000 *Zat* and 9,000 *Sawar*. Altogether from the day of coronation to the Nauroz, the emperor spent from the public treasury 1 crore and 60 lakhs in granting rewards and pensions.

Famine in Deccan and Gujarat, 1630 A.D.

During the year 1630 a terrible famine occurred in the Deccan and the countries of Gujarat and Khandesh. Thousands of people died of starvation, and parents consumed their own children, all feeling of parental love being destroyed by the pangs of hunger. Mirza Amin Qazwini, who was an eye-witness of these heart-rending sufferings, writes that unspeakable distress prevailed everywhere, and that in the bazar the grocers and traders mixed powdered bones with flour, and sold dog's flesh which was mistaken for meat by the poor and ignorant. Pestilence followed in the wake of famine. It raged with such fury that whole villages became desolate. Streets and lanes were glutted with human corpses, and the highways were so covered with filth that they became impassable. Many people fled towards Hindustan to save their lives, and many gave up the ghost in despair in their own country when they failed to procure anything to eat. Abdul Hamīd Lahori writes :

> "Destitution at length reached such a pitch that men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love. The number of the dying caused obstructions in the roads, and every man whose dire sufferings did not terminate in death and who retained the

power to move wandered off to the towns and villages of other countries. Those lands which had been famous for fertility and plenty now retained no trace of productiveness."[38]

The emperor was moved to pity by this widespread human suffering, and he ordered *langars* or public kitchens to be opened in Burhanpur, Ahmadabad and the province of Surat, where food was distributed every day gratis to the poor and the indigent.

On every Monday at Burhanpur 5,000 rupees were distributed among the famished population. Thus in twenty weeks the emperor spent a lakh of rupees. For the relief of the sufferers in Ahmadabad where misery exceeded all bounds he sanctioned another 50,000 rupees. Besides this charity the emperor was pleased to remit 70 lakhs of government revenue in the crown lands which amounted to nearly one-eleventh of the total revenue of the empire.[39] His benevolent example was followed by the mansabdars who made similar remissions in their jagirs.

Peter Mundy, the European traveller, who happened to be in the Deccan in November, 1630, describes the horrors of this calamitous visitation: "The highways were strewn with corpses which emitted intolerable stench. In the towns especially they drag them (dead bodies) out by the heels stark-naked, of all ages and sexes, till they are out of the gates, and then they are left, so that the way is half-barred up."[40] Mundy is supported by other European writers. The dearth of provisions was so great that even the English factors felt the pinch. Their correspondence reveals the dire distress that

38 Elliot, VII, p. 24.

39 Elliot, VII, p. 25. Qazwini says 50 lakhs of rupees which amounted to one-fifth of the assessment.

40 Travels of Peter Mundy, II, p. 44.

prevailed in the country. Prices rose seven-fold, and the poorer classes—tradesmen, artisans, mechanics, washermen, and dyers—left their homes in despair and perished in the fields for want of sustenance. Pestilence destroyed hundreds of lives, and large numbers of people were found in the streets dead or dying. The English and Dutch settlements were affected. Eleven English factors and three Dutch factors died, and the President of the English Factory, Rastall, also succumbed to the fell disease. The streets became impassable on account of the crowds of famished people, who cried out to the passer-by: 'Give us food or kill us.' The floods greatly aggravated their misery, and whole tracts of land became desolate.

Dr. Vincent Smith discounts the efforts of the state to afford succour to the famine-stricken people. He says that the remission of one-eleventh of the assessment implies that attempts were made to collect ten-eleventh, a burden which could not be borne by a country reduced to 'the direst extremity' and retaining 'no trace of productiveness.'[41] Dr. Smith, relying obviously on Elliot's imperfect translation of the *Padshahnamah*, thinks that a remission of a little more than an anna in the rupee was allowed. This view is not in agreement with the text. Abdul Hamīd clearly states that nearly 70 lakhs of rupees out of the 80 crore *dams* (2 crores of rupees) which were equal to one-eleventh of the total assessment (880 crores of *dams* according to the same writer) of the empire were remitted. It means that the remission amounted to nearly one-third of the total demand, *i.e.*, five annas four pies in the rupee, which is not so bad as Dr. Smith supposes. It is true, the concession was not commensurate with the appalling misery that prevailed in the country, but it was not altogether insignificant. Even if we assume, as the chronicler suggests,

[41] Oxford History, p. 394.

that larger remissions were made by mansabdars and jagirdars, the relief could not have been sufficient to cope with the terrible situation. But the charity of the emperor deserves to be commended. He was not unmindful of the interest of the poor people, and tried to mitigate human suffering according to mediæval methods. It would be unfair to apply to his conduct the standards which we must employ in judging the British administration, rightly regarded as one of the most scientific, efficient, and well-organised systems of the world.

Career of Mumtaz Mahal.

No woman of high rank has acquired such celebrity in history as Shahjahan's dearly loved queen Arjumand Banu Begum, familiarly known as Mumtaz Mahal or the lady of the Taj. She was the daughter of Asaf Khan who had risen to great eminence in the state. She was born in 1594 and was betrothed to Prince Khurram in 1606-7, when he was not full 16 years of age.[42] The Prince was already married to Qandhari Begum, but that was no obstacle to a fresh marriage according to Mughal custom. Arjumand Banu was well educated by her father. She had cultivated all the qualities and accomplishments which add to the dignity of womanhood. The fame of her beauty had spread far and wide, and was the subject of talk in the family circles of the dignitaries of the empire. Jahangir also heard of the superb loveliness and charms of Asaf's daughter, and was induced to give his consent to her marriage with his favourite son Khurram. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and splendour in April, 1612, and the emperor and empress took a leading part in marriage festivities. Few marriages in polygamous households have resulted in so much happiness as the marriage of Shahjahan with Arjumand Banu. Like her aunt, she captivated her

42 Shahjahan was born on 30th Rabi, I, 1000 A.H.=5th January, 1592.

husband's heart by her charms. She loved him passionately and he fully reciprocated her love. She continued to enjoy in the fullest measure his confidence to the day of her death. Through sunshine and storm, through good and evil days, she always behaved like a dutiful wife, cheerfully sharing her husband's joys and sorrows. When Shahjahan was a homeless exile for eight years during his father's reign, the Begum weathered the buffets of political life with a serenity which is fully deserving of our admiration. She always acted as his best friend and guide. Her advice he valued most, and even in matters of high policy he never took any initiative without consulting her. With his accession to the throne she rose to the full zenith of her fame.

Her allowances and jagirs were increased, and she was given precedence over all the other ladies of the imperial household. The title of Malik-i-Zamān was conferred upon her, and, as the prime confidante of the Mughal sovereign, she was entrusted with the custody of the royal seal which was afterwards transferred to her father at her own request.

Mumtaz's character never shone more brilliant than in the heyday of prosperity. Wealth did not blind her, like Marie Antoinette of France, to human misery and want. Her tender heart was moved to pity when she saw poor widows and orphans in distress. There was no miserable and oppressed man or woman in the empire but appealed to her with success. She gave away large sums in charity and provided money for the marriages of many a poor orphan girl. Her mercy rescued many a criminal who had despaired of life, and restored to their rank and dignity officers of the state who had incurred royal displeasure. In the *haram* she was a warmth diffusing bliss all around. Her numberless acts of kindness and generosity won her the love, respect and devotion of other ladies in an unequalled measure. She was encouraged and assisted in her humanitarian endeavours by her lady-in-waiting, Sati-un-

nissa Khānum,[43] who retained her native virtue in spite of the allurements of the Mughal zenana. After her death, the noble lady was honoured by being buried near the grave of her adored mistress. For her religion Mumtaz cherished a deep regard. She said her prayers and observed her fasts regularly, and the Muslim chronicler warmly speaks of her piety, because her religious views were strongly tinged with orthodoxy. Shahjahan's harsh measures against Christians and idolators must be ascribed in part to her influence, although he was astute enough to realise the disastrous consequences of a wholesale crusade against infidelity. But this was a petty blemish amidst a host of virtues, and if Mumtaz enthroned herself securely in the heart of her husband and the affections of his subjects, she did so by the nobility of her character and the unexampled practice of virtue. The emperor fully requited her devotion by building the Taj, which will remain for all time to come the noblest monument of conjugal love and fidelity.[44]

In 1630 when Shahjahan was conducting operations against Khanjahan Lodi from his camp at Burhanpur, Mumtaz gave birth to a daughter, her fourteenth child. The delivery was neither easy nor safe; some internal disorder brought on fainting fits, and the queen felt that the remorseless iron hour had arrived. She asked her daughter Jahanara to call the emperor from his apartments. As the emperor entered the

43 Sati-un-nissa Khānum belonged to a noble family of Mazandarān in Persia. Her brother was a poet at Jahangir's court and was given the title of *Malik-al-Shaura*. Sati-un-nissa Khānum entered the service of Mumtaz Mahal, and by her abilities and accomplishments gained her favour and confidence.

44 Dr. Vincent Smith writes (Oxford History, p. 305) that little is known of the personal character of Mumtaz Mahal. He did not utilise the Persian sources. The contemporary chroniclers, Mirza Amin Qazwini and Abdul Hamīd write at length about the noble qualities and accomplishments of the queen.

room and seated himself by her side, she piteously gazed at him with tearful eyes and whispered that he should be pleased to take care of her children and her aged parents when she had passed into the other world.[45] With these words the Begum closed her eyes in death (17th Zilqada, 1040 A.H. = 7th June, 1631 A.D.) leaving the emperor in a state of stupefaction.[46]

Fate could not have dealt a more cruel blow to Shahjahan. There was no dearth of wives, but Mumtaz's death caused a void in his life which could not be filled. As he looked back to the past, his sense of loss increased a hundred-fold, and the recollection of her constant love and devotion made his grief more poignant and bitter. The entire court went into mourning, and the emperor did not appear in the Jharokha for one week and transacted no public business. Often did he exclaim in bitter anguish of the soul that it was only his regard for the sacred trust of empire, which no one can throw aside at his pleasure, that prevented him from renouncing the world and taking to a life of secluded asceticism. Whenever he went to pay a visit to the Begum's tomb, streams of tears came out of his eyes, and he expressed his grief by saying, 'Empire has no sweetness, life itself has no relish left for me now.' He found nothing in the *haram* that could afford him pleasure, and he returned saying, 'Nobody's face can delight me now.' He gave up costly dress, jewellery, and perfumes, and eschewed every kind of pleasure for a period of two years. Sorrow proved to him a cruel fellow-

45 Abdul Hamīd Lahori writes (I, p. 385) والده ماجده, only.

46 Abdul Hamīd Lahori gives the age of the queen at this time as 38 years and 2 months Shamsi.

Padshahnamah, Vol. I, p. 389.

Elliot's statement that the queen was in her 40th year is not in agreement with the text. History of India, VII, p. 27.

ship indeed; he had so far, says the Muslim chronicler, only a few grey hair in his beard, but now it all became silver grey in a short time.[47] Mumtaz's remains were brought to Akbarabad after six months and were provisionally interred in the gardens of the Taj. Later, they were removed to the place where the mausoleum now stands. In the palace her place was taken by Jahanara Begum.[48]

War with the Portuguese, 1631-32.

The Portuguese had established themselves at Hugli with the permission of the former rulers of Bengal. In course of time they developed their power and influence, and built a number of substantial buildings which they fortified with cannon, muskets and other fighting material. Surrounded on one side by the river and on three sides by a deep moat full of water, the port of Hugli occupied a strong position and could successfully hold at bay an invading army. Foreigners took the lease of the villages on both sides of the river at a low rent, and this gave them an opportunity of tyrannising over the poor people. Besides, they levied customs duties through their own officers to the great detriment of the revenue of the state and engaged in slave trade, which was accompanied by much cruelty and torture. With such nefarious practices, they were bound sooner or later to draw down upon themselves the wrath of the imperial government.

The misbehaviour of the Portuguese at Hugli was not a solitary instance of their high-handedness. They had been making mischief for some time past not only in Bengal, but

47 A. H., Padshahnama, I, p. 388.

Qazwini says the emperor had not more than ten or twelve grey hair in his beard, but now nearly one-third of it became completely white.

48 Jahanara henceforward held a position of pre-eminence in the royal palace. Mumtaz's *tarkah* (ترکه) was divided among her children. Half of it was given to Jahanara Begum and the rest to the other children. Her allowance was increased by four lakhs a year.

also in other parts of India. Their Jesuit priests tried to impose their beliefs on the people in a most fanatical spirit and caused much embarrassment to their government. In 1629 the Archbishop of Goa wrote to the King of Portugal complaining in strong terms of the conduct of the ecclesiastics who invariably disregarded the civil power. Sometimes they intrigued with the Dutch and the Muhammadans even against their own government, and did more harm to their country than its avowed enemies. They behaved in like manner at Hugli, and when their insolence reached its highest pitch, the emperor took vigorous measures to suppress them.

The Portuguese had shown much audacity in seizing two slave girls belonging to Mumtaz Mahal, when Shahjahan was in rebellion against his father, and refused to release them. Mumtaz was greatly offended and resolved to chastise them. The misdeeds of the Portuguese had been brought to Shahjahan's notice even before his accession, and he was only waiting for an opportunity to root out their power.

Soon after his accession the emperor appointed Qasim Khan as governor of Bengal in 1631, and ordered him to take steps to exterminate the infidels. The royal forces marched into Bengal by land and sea under Qasim's son Inayat-Ullah and another general Bahadur Kambu. When all the forces had reached the mouth of the river, the imperialists assumed the offensive on the 2nd Zil Hijja, 1041 A.H. The Portuguese living in the villages on both sides of the river were attacked and 'sent to hell.' The capture of Bengali boatmen led to serious defections in their ranks, and about 4,000 men went over to the enemy.

The siege of Hugli lasted for three-and-a-half months. The crafty Portuguese feigned submission and offered a lakh of rupees and tribute, but secretly put their forces in order and arranged that 7,000 gunners should open fire on the Mughals. After a good deal of strenuous fighting their tactics were foiled,

and they were overpowered. Many rushed into the waters and were drowned, and those that escaped were captured by the enemy.

The Portuguese losses were heavy; about 10,000 of their men, women, and children were killed, and about 4,400 were made captives, while on the Mughal side, the chronicler remarks that, nearly one thousand men 'obtained the glory of martyrdom.' The Portuguese tyranny was thus ended, and about ten thousand inhabitants of the neighbouring country who had been confined by them in prison were set at liberty.

What displeased the emperor most was the fanaticism of the Portuguese. To the captives a choice was offered between Islam and life-long imprisonment or slavery. They had been used to make conversions by force, and now the imperial government paid them back in their own coin with compound interest. Some who valued their lives more than their beliefs readily embraced Islam, but there were many who suffered torture and cruelty with undaunted courage and "passed from prison to hell." Their idols were either thrown into the Jamna or broken into pieces. Those who survived this cruel treatment were permitted to occupy Hugli again, but the port never recovered its former prosperity despite the efforts of the local administration.

A word must be said about the manner of this campaign. The emperor was ruthlessly vindictive in his attitude towards the Christians, and the punishments which he inflicted upon them were disproportionate to their guilt. It is true, they had grossly misbehaved, their audacity and insolence were reprehensible in the highest degree, but to impose upon helpless men, women and children the choice between Islam and death was a proceeding of which there can be no justification. If the emperor had been more tolerant and generous, he might have achieved his end with a lesser sacrifice of innocent lives. His treatment of the vanquished took the colour of a religious

persecution, but in criticising the emperor's policy we should bear in mind the impertinences of the Portuguese not only in Bengal but all over India.

Shahjahan's Orthodoxy.

Shahjahan's reign marks a reaction against the liberal policy of Jahangir. The contemporary Muslim chronicler describes him with pleasure as *Shahanshah Din-i-Panah*, and speaks with approbation of his measures against Hindu orthodoxy. In 1632 the emperor was informed that the 'wealthy infidels' in Benares were desirous of completing the idol temples which had begun during the reign of his predecessor. An order was issued that in Benares and in other parts of the empire the temples, whose construction had commenced, should be razed to the ground. The local officers perhaps literally carried out the imperial command, and shortly afterwards news came from Allahabad that in the country of Benares seventy-six temples had been completely demolished.[49] This was a foretaste of that fanaticism which afterwards wrecked the empire. Shahjahan's bigotry manifested itself in his dealing with the ruler of Golkunda. As an orthodox Sunni he forbade the *tabarrā* (تبّرا) or the abuse of the first three Khalifas in the dominions of the Qutb Shah.[50] A clause to this effect was included in the treaty, and henceforward the names of

49 و شهنشاه دین پناه حکم فرموده بودند که چه بنارس و چه دیگر محال ممالک محروسه هرجا بتخانه احداث یافته باشد اُنرا براندازند—درینولا از عرضه درشت و تشنیع نگار صوبه الهآباد معروض گشت که هفتاد وشش بتخانه درخطه بنارس بخاک باهر گدیدند—

A. H. Padshahnama, I, p. 402.

50 *Tabarrā* literally means complete dissociation from something that is bad or highly objectionable. The Shias were in the habit of abusing the first three Khalifas, Abu Bakr, Omar, and Osman and of introducing the name of the Persian king in the Khutba. The emperor as a champion of Sunni orthodoxy strongly objected to this and asked the Deccan Sultans to give up the practice. A clause to this effect was added in the treaty. A. H. Padshahnama, Vol. II, p. 131.

the first three Khalifas were to figure in the Khutba of the ruler of Golkunda. The imperial *farman* clearly states that the emperor regarded this as a sacred duty.

Deccan Policy.

Shahjahan like his predecessors was anxious to conquer the Muslim kingdoms of the Deccan, and he waged wars against them pertinaciously for a number of years. Akbar and Jahangir were actuated by political motives in their Deccan campaigns. But a change came over Mughal policy in Shahjahan's time. As a champion of Sunni orthodoxy, he felt it his duty to exterminate the Shia heresy in the south. Hence his wars were prompted by political and religious motives. His son Aurangzeb followed the same policy on a more comprehensive scale.

Before entering on a discussion of Shahjahan's plans and policies in the Deccan it would be well to examine the relations which subsisted between the Deccan states and the Mughals prior to his accession to the throne.

Akbar had conquered Khandesh (1599) and Ahmadnagar (1600), and annexed them to the empire. When he was at Asirgarh, Salim revolted in the north, and the operations had to be suspended. Though Ahmadnagar was a part of Akbar's dominion, it was never effectively brought under his sway, and in many districts ambitious men acted as they pleased. Taking advantage of the distracted condition of Ahmadnagar the rulers of Golkunda and Bijapur enlarged their territory at its expense.

During Jahangir's reign, the Mughals made no substantial progress. Their advance was checked by Malik Ambar, the Abyssinian minister of the Nizam Shahi kings, of whom some account has been given before. He employed the light Maratha cavalry, and with its help recovered the lost Ahmadnagar territory, and drove the Mughals back to Burhanpur. It was seriously feared at one time that the Mughal frontier might again recede backwards to the Vindhyas. To manage this

disquieting state of affairs Jahangir sent Shahjahan to the Deccan. The Prince succeeded by his gallantry in the field of battle in dictating terms to the Deccan powers, and saved the prestige of the empire from ruin. But this was a short-lived triumph. Shahjahan's rebellion and Mahabat's disgrace, which followed soon afterwards, convulsed the empire, and seriously interrupted the activities of the Mughal generals in the Deccan. The Sultanates got their opportunity and again began to defy the imperial power.

With Shahjahan's accession to the throne commenced a new era of Deccan policy. Fully aware of the strong and weak points of the Deccan states, he was qualified to undertake operations on a large scale. In 1629 Khan Jahan Lodi's rebellion was suppressed, but a year later the combined efforts of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar gave Shahjahan an opportunity to interfere effectively in Deccan politics. Fatah Khan, the son of Malik Ambar, who had taken his father's place after his death, informed Asaf Khan that the fear for his own life had led him to throw into prison the Nizam Shahi king. A reply was sent to him that he 'should rid the world of such a worthless and wicked being.' Fatah Khan promptly carried out the atrocious suggestion, and placed on the throne Nizam Shah's son Husain, a boy of ten years. In this scheme he had the full support of the Mughal government.

The presence of a *roi faineant* at Ahmadnagar once again emboldened Bijapur and Golkunda to enrich themselves at the expense of their neighbour. Shahjahan called upon the Sultan of Bijapur who 'had shown himself unfaithful to the imperial throne' to renew his allegiance to the Mughals, and deputed Asaf Khan to awaken him to a sense of his duty. The general forthwith proceeded to execute his mission, and laid siege to Bijapur (1631 A.D.). The Mughals enjoyed a 'warm interchange of rockets, arrows, and musketry' with the enemy, and the siege went on for 20 days. But the exhaustion of supplies

alarmed Asaf Khan, and his anxiety increased considerably when he learnt that grain had risen to one rupee per *seer*, and that men and cattle had already begun to die of hunger. The siege was raised, and the Mughal army started in search of provisions. It freely engaged in plunder, and 'on whatever road they (the soldiers) went they killed and made prisoners and ravaged and laid waste on both sides.' The Bijapuris were made to feel the hoofs of Mughal horses, and the most flourishing part of their country 'was trodden under.' The royal forces withdrew to Mughal territory, and the emperor left for the north on the 24th Ramzan, 1041 A.H. (=4th April, 1632 A.D.). As Asaf Khan had not been able to manage the Deccan affairs properly, Mahabat Khan was directed to take his place.

Extinction of the Nizam Shahi kingdom.

Malik Ambar's son Fatah Khan had received from the emperor in lieu of his submission certain districts which had really belonged to him, but had latterly been given to Shahji. Deeply incensed at this, Shahji called in the aid of Adil Shah to assist him in wresting the fort of Daulatabad from the Nizam Shahis. Fatah Khan, who was alarmed for his safety, wrote to Mahabat Khan that he intended to deliver the fortress to the imperialists on which Mahabat sent his son with a force, and himself followed a little later. The Bijapuris were defeated in a well-contested engagement, and a bastion of the fort was stormed by a mine. A breach was effected in the walls of the fort, but the brave men of Bijapur 'kept up such a rain of arrows, bullets, and rockets that the storming party was obliged to take refuge in the trenches.' Urged by the Khan-i-Khanan, the imperialists rushed to the breach, forced their entry into the fort and applied their swords with deadly effect. The fortifications of Ambar, 14 *gaz* in height and 10 in thickness, were destroyed by the besiegers.

The imperialists laid another mine under the fortress, and Fatah Khan was so alarmed that he removed his family to a

place of safety. He sent word to the Khan-i-Khanan to postpone the explosion of the mine for a day to give him time to consult the Bijapuris about terms. The Khan-i-Khanan who was now convinced of his duplicity and bad faith replied that he should send his son as a hostage, if he desired the explosion to be postponed.

Fatah Khan certainly did not mean to keep his word. He was simply temporising with his opponents. When a fresh breach was effected in the wall, he realised that further resistance was impossible. He wanted a week's time to remove his own and the royal family out of the danger zone, and sent his eldest son as a security for the fulfilment of his word. His request was granted, and the Khan-i-Khanan showed his kindness by sending him ten lakhs and fifty thousand rupees as desired. It was an act of shameful cowardice on the part of Ambar's son to accept such a huge bribe as the price of his surrender. He sent the keys to the Khan-i-Khanan and with his pockets full of imperial gold he made his dishonourable exist from the fort on the 19th Zilhijjah, 1042 A.H. (=18th June, 1633).

The Mughal banner was planted on the ruined ramparts of Daulatabad, and the Khutba was read in the emperor's name. Husain Shah, the puppet king whom Fatah Khan had placed upon the throne, was handed over to the Mughals. He was condemned to imprisonment, and sent to the fortress of Gwalior to sigh out his life in deep despair. The kingdom of Ahmadnagar ceased to exist.

The Bijapuris again laid siege to Daulatabad but they were compelled to withdraw by the imperialists. The fortress of Parenda baffled the attempts of the Khan-i-Khanan to reduce it. The siege went on for seven months with heavy losses on both sides. At last the advent of the rains obliged the Mughals to retreat to Burhanpur. The veteran Mahabat Khan died on 14th Jamad I, 1044 A.H.=26th October, 1634

A.D. As a temporary measure the Khan-i-Dauran, the governor of Malwa, was appointed to act in his place.

Jujhar's second rebellion, 1635-36.

Jujhar Bundela rebelled a second time. His offence consisted in slaying the Raja of Chauragarh and in forcibly seizing the vast treasures of the latter. The murdered Raja's son appealed to Shahjahan for help, but instead of bringing the offender to book the latter demanded of Jujhar a share of the booty. This was refused and war became inevitable.

The emperor sent three armies, numbering nearly 23,000 men, into Bundelkhand territory, ostensibly to back up the cause of Devi Singh, a rival claimant to the Bundela throne, but in reality to humble Jujhar. Jujhar and his son Bikramajit fled from the field of battle and were killed by the Gonds. Their heads were cut off and sent to the emperor (December, 1635).

An unhappy tragedy followed the deaths of Jujhar and his sons. Jujhar's mother Rani Pārbati, Bir Singh's widow, who had been hit by the Mughals during her son's flight, died of her wounds, but the other ladies—daughters of proud chiefs and warriors of ancient lineage—were captured and introduced into the Mughal *haram* to pass their lives in gilded misery. Two sons of the rebel were converted to Islam, and a third Udayabhan was butchered in cold blood, because he had the effrontery to persist in his beliefs. The temple of Orchha was turned into a mosque, and the hidden treasures of Jujhar were taken possession of by the victors. Devi Singh got the crown of Orchha as the reward of his treachery, but all the other Bundela chiefs refused to acknowledge him as their overlord.[51] Champat Rao of Mahoba, who disapproved of Devi Singh's disgraceful conduct, did not submit to him

[51] The reader will do well to read Sir J. N. Sarkar's account of the war. History of Aurangzeb, I, pp. 13—26.

and remained aloof. His son Chatrasal turned out a chip of the old block ; he carried on the war of independence against the empire for years, though he failed to organise the Bundelas into a solid union.

The Deccan again, 1635-36.

Shahjahan's wars in the Deccan which have been described before did not result in a complete conquest of the Muslim states of Bijapur and Golkunda. His Sunni heart was disappointed to find that heresy was still rampant in the Deccan, and he must needs employ his vast resources in putting an end to it. Besides, he was deeply enraged at Shahji's attempts to create trouble in Ahmadnagar. The Maratha leader had set up a boy of the Nizam Shahi family as king in direct opposition to the imperial government. The emperor sent his generals to chastise the rebels and ravage the country of Shahji. Soon after it transpired that the king of Bijapur had sent men and money to aid the Ahmadnagar rebels in their designs. These intrigues accelerated the emperor's decision to launch a vigorous campaign in the Deccan. He called upon Bijapur and Golkunda to acknowledge his suzerainty, to pay *khiraj* as a mark of submission, and abstain from every kind of interference in the affairs of Ahmadnagar. The emperor himself proceeded to Daulatabad in February, 1636, and mobilised a host of 50,000 men to deal with the hostile powers. The ruler of Golkunda, overwhelmed by the presence of such a powerful army, judged discretion to be the better part of valour, and made his submission. The imperial envoy Abdul Latif was received at a distance of ten miles from the capital by the Qutb Shah, who acknowledged the suzerainty of the Mughal emperor, and agreed to have the Khutba read and the coins struck in the latter's name. With a servility which did little credit to his high rank, the Qutb Shah accepted all the humiliating terms proposed by the emperor. He agreed to the inclusion of the first three Khalifas in the Khutba and the removal of the

name of the Persian ruler to whom the Shias had turned for help and guidance.

The emperor informed the Sultan of Bijapur of the consequences of defiance and disobedience, but no reply was received. Three imperial generals marched into Bijapur territory from three sides—Khanjahan by way of Sholapur, Khan-i-Zaman by way of Indapur, and Khan-i-Dauran from the side of Bidar in the north-east. The country was encircled on all sides by the Mughal soldiery and was ruthlessly devastated. Thousands of men were captured and killed, and many forts were wrested from the enemy's possession. Both sides soon grew tired of war, and negotiations for peace began. The terms of the treaty were settled. Adil Shah acknowledged the suzerainty of the emperor, and promised to abstain from all interference in the affairs of Ahmadnagar, the territory of which was divided between the two parties—the share of Bijapur being 50 parganas yielding an income of 20 lakhs of *huns* (=80 lakhs of rupees). A sum of 20 lakhs of rupees in cash and kind was demanded as tribute, and the Sultan was warned not to molest the sister kingdom of Golkunda which had accepted the imperial vassalage. Both sides recognised the importance of faithful service and bound themselves not to tamper with the loyalty of their respective officers and men. A clause was embodied in the treaty defining the relations of the Sultan towards Shahji. He was not to be admitted in the service of the Bijapur State, nor was any favour to be shown to him, if he refused to abandon the Nizam Shahi forts which he had seized during the war.

The Sultan felt much disturbed by the emperor's presence near the scene of action, and prayed that his Majesty be pleased to depart from the place so that the fears and anxieties of his subjects might be set at rest. His wish was granted, and the emperor set out for Mandu on July 11, 1636.

This treaty sealed the humiliation of Bijapur. God and the Prophet were made witnesses to its solemn contents which were never to be departed from by either party. The Sultan showed his obsequiousness further by requesting the emperor to send him a portrait of his, adorned with jewels, rubies, and precious diamonds. Before the Mughal envoy, who conveyed to him this token of imperial favour, the Sultan swore on the Quran that he would always adhere to the stipulations of the treaty. The ruler of Golkunda followed the example of the 'elder brother,' and sent a rich tribute in gold. Aurangzeb, the third son of Shahjahan, who was merely a lad of 18 years, was appointed viceroy of the Deccan.

Aurangzeb's first Viceroyalty of the Deccan (July, 1636 —May, 1644).

Aurangzeb's charge consisted of the following provinces :—

(1) Daulatabad with Ahmadnagar and other districts with its capital first at Ahmadnagar and later at Daulatabad. This was called the Subah of the Deccan.

(2) Telingana situated in the country of Balaghat extending from the Chand and the Wainganga river to the north and north-eastern frontiers of Golkunda.

(3) Khandesh or the Tapti valley with its capital at Burhanpur and fort at Asir.

(4) Berar, south-east of Khandesh, with its capital at Elichpur and fort at Gwaligarh well known for its natural strength and solidity.

These four provinces contained 64 forts, and their total revenue amounted to two *arab dams*, equivalent to five crores of rupees.

The imperial generals sent by Shahjahan reduced the Ahmadnagar forts and Khan-i-Zaman succeeded in compelling Shahji's submission. The supposititious heir to the Nizam Shahi kingdom was made over to the Mughals who threw him into prison.

The district of Baglānā with its 34 parganas was subdued by Aurangzeb, and its forts of Salir and Malir which enjoyed a position of great advantage were captured by the enemy. The ruler of the place Bharji submitted and offered to join the imperial service, if the pargana of Sultanpur was left to him. The emperor made him a *mansabdar* of 3,000 *Zat* and 2,500 *Sawar* and confirmed him in the possession of the fief of Sultanpur.

A strange mishap occurred at the capital which furnished the occasion for Aurangzeb's resignation of the viceroyalty of the Deccan. Shahjahan's daughter Jahanara styled as the Begam Sahib, a kind-hearted and generous lady, was badly burnt on the night of March 26, 1644, her fine garment of muslim richly perfumed with *attar* having caught fire from the flame of a candle in one of the passages. At one time there was no hope of her life, and physicians from all parts of the empire gathered at the capital to save the life of the princess. Shahjahan stopped all public business, and bestowed his best care and attention on her. He himself attended her sick-bed, and applied the medicine with his own hands. Every night a purse of one thousand rupees was placed below the pillow of the princess, and was in the morning distributed among the poor and the indigent, so that their united prayers might assist the speedy recovery of the royal patient. Officers who had been thrown into prison on the charge of embezzlement of public funds were released, and their liabilities amounting to seven lakhs of rupees were paid by the emperor. Every day, with tears in his eyes, the emperor sighed out prayers from sunset till midnight for his dearly loved daughter's recovery. But she remained in a critical condition for four months and was not completely cured until after nine months. The medicines of the most competent physicians failed to produce any effect. At last a slave named Ārif prepared an

Aurangzeb's resignation.

ointment which healed the sores, and afforded her much relief. The recovery of the princess was celebrated with great pomp and magnificence by her affectionate father, and festivities continued for eight days. Huge sums of money were distributed to the poor, and large gifts were made to the nobles and officers of the state. Ārif the healer of the princess's wounds, was weighed in gold, and the emperor gave him an amount of money equivalent to its value together with robes of honour, horses, and elephants.

Aurangzeb went to Agra in May to see his sister who was in such a dangerous condition. Three weeks after his arrival, he was dismissed and deprived of his rank and jagir by his father. What was the cause of this sudden dismissal? The Muslim chroniclers write that he was punished, because he had taken to the life of a hermit of which the emperor thoroughly disapproved. This may or may not be a cause of his resignation. It is not entirely improbable in view of the fact that Aurangzeb was a religious zealot, who lived throughout his life like a *faqir*. But in this case the deciding factor was Dara's jealousy and distrust of his able and intrepid brother. He had insulted him on more than one occasion, poisoned the ears of the emperor against him, thwarted his measures, and superseded his orders—indignities which had sunk deep into his heart. He felt that he was treated unjustly and ungenerously by his brother, who was misusing his position as the emperor's right-hand man, and that he could no longer govern the Deccan under such humiliations. Thoroughly disgusted with Dara's veiled hostility and studied insults the high-spirited viceroy resigned in May, 1644.

Through Jahanara's good offices he was again restored to favour, and was appointed to the governorship of Gujarat on February 16, 1645, where he gave proof of his ability and energy, and two years later he was sent as governor to the province of Balkh and Badakhshan.

Capture of Qandhar, 1637-1638.

During Jahangir's reign Qandhar had been seized by the Persians in 1622. Shahjahan was asked to guard the fort against them but he refused to move owing to a serious misunderstanding caused by Nurjahan's intrigues. Since then, it had been in the hands of the Persians. It was held at this time by Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian governor.

Shahjahan, having settled the affairs of the empire, turned his attention towards the north. Said Khan, the governor of Kabul, was sent to reconnoitre the fortress and to estimate the strength of the garrison posted there. A temptation was offered to Ali Mardan, and he was asked to submit. But his loyalty was firm and he promised that he would send a reply later. The governor was informed that he should not make such overtures in the future. When this refusal was communicated to Shahjahan, he determined to lead an expedition to Qandhar. Ali Mardan thereupon began to build another fort on a mountain ridge and to make preparations for his defence. He wrote to his master for help, but the latter misunderstood his motives. Autocrats are always jealous and suspicious, and the Persian ruler thought that Ali Mardan wished to strengthen his own power and to create an *imperium in imperio*. The Shah's suspicions were confirmed by the enemies of Ali Mardan at court. An order was sent to the governor to send his son as a hostage, which he immediately did ; he moreover forwarded a substantial *peshkash* as a proof of his loyalty. But nothing availed to set at rest the doubts of the Shah who sent one of his generals with an army ostensibly to help Ali Mardan, but in reality to bring him in chains to court or to cut off his head. It was a stupid and thoughtless order and brought about an unexpected change in the situation. Ali Mardan sent a message to Said Khan to inform the emperor that he was willing to surrender the fortress. The imperialists marched upon Qandhar and easily acquired possession of the

fort. The Persian general, who was encamped at a distance of 6 Krohs from Qandhar, was defeated, and much booty fell into the hands of the Mughals. Ali Mardan was paid a lakh of rupees by Said Khan, and was enrolled among the grandees of the empire. After a series of skirmishes and battles with the Persians and their supporters among the Afghan tribes the dependencies of Qandhar along with 60 forts passed under imperial control.

Ali Mardan was received well by the emperor. Later he was appointed governor of Kashmir, and his *mansab* was raised to 6,000 *Zat* and 6,000 *Sawar*. The emperor paid him a large sum of money and honoured him with a visit. As time passed, Ali Mardan rose still higher in the service of the state. He was promoted to the rank of 7,000 *Zat* and 7,000 *Sawar* and was entrusted with the governorship of the Punjab in addition to Kashmir. A lakh of rupees was advanced to him (Jamad II, 1049=October, 1639 A.D.) from the treasury for the construction of a canal from the Ravi river to the city of Lahore, a distance of 49 Krohs.

Sadullah Khan joined the imperial service in 1640. At first he was paid a monthly salary, but later a *mansab* was granted to him, and in a year's time he rose to be an officer, holding the rank of 1,000 *Zat* and 2,000 *Sawar*. Later he became Darogha of the *Ghusalkhana* and for some time held the post of Khansamah or Lord High Steward. The emperor was impressed by his great ability and integrity, and recognised his administrative talents by appointing him to the office of the Chief Wazir of the empire. In the seventh year his rank was raised to 7,000 *Zat* and 7,000 *Sawar* (*duaspah* and *siaspah*), and he was awarded two crores of *dams* (5 lakhs of rupees) in cash. Sadullah continued to rise in royal favour, and his power and influence increased to such an extent that even Dara, the heir-apparent to the throne, envied him.

Sadullah Khan.

Life and death of Asaf Khan.

Abdul Hasan, surnamed Asaf Khan, was the son of Itmad-ud-dowla and brother of Nurjahan Begum. He rose to fame during the reign of Jahangir, but reaped greater honours on Shahjahan's accession to the throne. The title of Yamīn-ud-dowlah (right hand of the state) was conferred upon him, and he was granted a jagir of 50 lakhs a year. Gradually he rose to be the prime minister of the empire, and his *mansab* was raised to 9,000 *Zat* and 9,000 *Sawar*. He was an officer of great ability who served the state all his life with unrivalled devotion and loyalty. Shahjahan, too, on his part fully recognised the services of the minister who had helped him to secure the imperial throne. Asaf Khan often acted as the chief agent of the emperor in diplomatic negotiations, and never betrayed the trust reposed in him. Failing health compelled his retirement from official life, and he died at Lahore in 1641 A.D., which is recorded in the chronogram *Zihe afsos Asaf Khan*.

Asaf's remains were buried near Jahangir's tomb in a building and garden which he had himself erected. As the distinguished nobleman lay on his death-bed in the grip of a mortal disease, the emperor paid him a visit at his residence. The minister's loyalty, which had stood many a hard test, shone refulgent even in his last moments. He spontaneously offered to the emperor the vast riches and property which he had accumulated during his official career. His Lahore house alone was worth 20 lakhs, and he had stately residences in other cities. Besides, he told the emperor that he had in his possession jewels and cash amounting to 2 crores and 50 lakhs which he begged him to confiscate. Out of this huge sum the emperor gave only 20 lakhs to his children, and the rest passed to the state by the law of escheat.

To the north of the country now called Afghanistan lay the provinces of Balkh and Badakhshan, jammed in between

the river Oxus and the Hindukush mountains. In the middle ages they were neither civilised nor prosperous and had been ruthlessly ravaged by the Mongols, Uzbegs, and Turkomans, who had all inflicted untold misery on the native population. Like his predecessors Shahjahan felt a desire to conquer the lands of Transoxiana, where his ancestors had once exercised their sway. He looked back to the glories of Timur, and his heart longed to achieve renown in these distant lands. Samarqand was one of the capitals of the Timurids, and the Indian Mughals at times cherished the dream of regaining possession of the city which Babar had thrice won and lost. With such thoughts in his mind Shahjahan attempted the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan, dependencies of the kingdom of Bokhara without adequate means of defending themselves against a powerful invader. Shahjahan's motive was purely lust of conquest, for Balkh and Badakhshan had given him no trouble whatever. A dispute in the royal family of Balkh encouraged him in his designs. Nazr Muhammad Khan, ruler of Bokhara, was in difficulties owing to the rebellious conduct of his son Abdul Aziz. He had ended the quarrel by keeping Balkh and Badakhshan for himself and giving Transoxiana to the rebel. Shahjahan judged this a good opportunity for interference.

Shahjahan's Central Asian Policy.

But the imperial project was thoroughly ill-conceived. To mobilise an Indian army through the Hindukush in sufficient numbers for the conquest of Central Asia was a foolhardy enterprise without any chance of success, and Prof. J. N. Sarkar rightly observes that the prosperity of his reign and the flattery of his courtiers had turned his (Shahjahan's) head, and that he was dreaming the vainest of vain dreams.[52] No amount of effort could ensure success in such a hazardous enterprise

52 History of Aurangzeb, I, p. 81.

in a most difficult and inhospitable region, far away from the principal reservoir of imperial strength and power. The whole scheme was foredoomed to failure from the very outset.

Prince Murad marched (June 1646) into Balkh at the head of 50,000 horse and 10,000 foot, accompanied by some of the most distinguished generals of the empire. Ali Mardan Khan who knew the country well also went with the prince. The city of Balkh was entered on July 2, 1646, without encountering any opposition. Nazr Muhammad had fled to Persia, but finding it difficult to obtain support there came back. He left his vast wealth amounting to 70 lakhs to be plundered by the Mughal soldiery. In the general scramble that followed the flight of Nazr, the Mughals were able to seize only 12 lakhs of rupees, 2,500 horses and 300 camels. Murad, who lacked a determined will, pined for the pleasure of the plains, and begged the emperor's permission to leave the place. His officers were equally unwilling to stay in the rugged and hilly country where the delights of social life were denied to them. The prince left for Hindustan in spite of the emperor's repeated refusals. Sadullah Khan was immediately ordered to proceed to Balkh. He posted the imperial officers in important centres, and finished the settlement of the whole country in 22 days, and then returned to Kabul. Murad was deprived of his rank and was refused admission to court.

Meanwhile the emperor made preparations for a vigorous campaign. Shuja and Aurangzeb were called from their provinces to lead the command. The expedition was liberally financed, and the emperor himself proceeded to Kabul to direct operations in person.

But Aurangzeb suffered from a serious handicap. His position was not so strong as that of the enemy. The Uzbegs numbered about 100,000 while the Mughal force consisted only of 25,000 men. The generals who held districts assigned to

them by Sadullah Khan were kept, but they did not leave their posts promptly, when their services were required elsewhere. The Uzbeg mode of fighting also added to the difficulties of the Mughals. The nomad savages never risked an open engagement, and the Mughals found that they were powerless against their "Cossack tactics." But Aurangzeb was not the man to flinch from his resolve. In the first battle the Uzbegs fled from the field when the Mughals and Rajputs opened fire on them. They attacked the imperialists again, but only to sustain a severe defeat. Aurangzeb entered Balkh in triumph, and placed it under the command of the Rajput chief Madhu Singh Hādā.

Aurangzeb proceeded from Balkh to Aqcha to deal with the Uzbegs who were hovering round the Mughal army. Fighting went on incessantly, and the Mughals had to endure much hardship and misery. The Uzbegs attacked the moving columns of the Mughal army but the onward march continued. News from Balkh that a large army was coming from Bokhara to its rescue alarmed Aurangzeb and he retreated forthwith. The Bokhara army under its ablest leaders again gave battle, but it had to give way before the fiery onset of the Mughal musketeers. Convinced of the superior strength of the opposing force, the king of Bokhara sent a friendly message, and negotiations for peace began. Aurangzeb safely reached Balkh.

The Mughals had put forth a strenuous fight against heavy odds. They faced the direst hardship with great composure and fortitude, and never allowed hunger or sickness to interfere with the progress of the operations. But the soul of this deadly resistance was Aurangzeb himself. Even the ruler of Bokhara was impressed by his coolness and courage when he saw him in the thick of the fight spreading his carpet on the blood-stained ground to say his prayers amidst the clash of arms and the cries of warriors around him. To fight with a man of this

kind was to court sure death and ruin, exclaimed Nazr's son Abdul Aziz in wonder, and ordered all further fighting to be stopped.

The battle was over, but it was difficult to settle the terms of a lasting peace. Shahjahan was inclined to give the country back to Nazr Muhammad, but he insisted on the condition that he should first make his submission. Three months were wasted in negotiations, but the ex-king of Balkh could not make up his mind to accept the terms offered to him. Still in a state of doubt and uncertainty, he sent his grandsons to wait on the prince and excused himself on the ground of illness. As the prince wanted to leave the place quickly, he made over the fort and city of Balkh to Nazr Muhammad's grandsons and made preparations for his homeward journey.

The Mughal army began its retreat towards Kabul. It was attacked by the hillmen called the Hazaras who proved as heartless as the Uzbegs. The prince and his *entourage* slowly wended their way through snow and reached Kabul. But the Rajputs who were left behind suffered untold misery. Men and beasts fell down headlong into the depths and died without food or shelter. It was a terrible retreat resembling in its horrors the British withdrawal from Kabul in 1842.

The enterprise failed dismally and caused heavy loss in men and money. To the havoc wrought by famine were added the rigours of a cruel winter and hundreds perished in the snow. The state had to spend in two years nearly four crores of rupees whereas the return in the shape of revenue from conquered lands amounted only to 22½ lakhs—poor compensation, indeed, for arduous toils and heroic sacrifices. There was no increase in prestige, nor was an inch of land added to the imperial dominions. The historian of Aurangzeb sums up the result of the campaign in these words:

> "Thus ended Shahjahan's fatuous war in Balkh—a war in which the Indian treasury spent four crores of

rupees in two years and realised from the conquered country a revenue of 22½ lakhs only. Not an inch of territory was annexed, nor dynasty changed, and no enemy replaced by an ally on the throne of Balkh. The grain store in Balkh fort, worth 5 lakhs, and the provisions in other forts as well, were all abandoned to the Bukharians, besides Rs. 50,000 in cash presented to Nazr Muhammad's grandsons and Rs. 22,500 to envoys. Five hundred soldiers fell in battle and ten times that number (including camp followers) were slain by cold and snow on the mountains. Such is the terrible price that aggressive imperialism makes India pay for wars across the North-West Frontier."[53]

Firuz Shahi Canal.

Sultan Firuz Tughluq had constructed a canal from the river Jamna near Khizrabad to Safidun, his hunting ground. After his death the canal fell out of repairs, and became useless until it was restored by Shihab-ud-din Ali Khan, hākim of Delhi, during the reign of Akbar. It was known as Nahr-i-Shihāb (canal of Shihab). Again it became useless through neglect and was repaired by Shahjahan's orders. A new canal was constructed from Safidun to the royal palace, extending over a distance of 30 krohs. To this canal was given the name of *Nahr-i-Bihisht* (celestial canal).

Loss of Qandhar.

It will be remembered that in 1638 Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian governor, had surrendered Qandhar into Mughal hands. But the Persians had never abandoned the hope of regaining it. Shah Abbas II, who had come to the throne in 1642, made vigorous efforts to collect men and money for the recapture of Qandhar which was a valuable possession from the

[53] Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, 99-100.

commercial and strategic point of view. Steps were taken to store up grain at Farah, Sistan, and other important centres, and a detachment was sent to Herat to interrupt the communications on that side. As the winter was approaching, the Shah himself intended to proceed towards the city, knowing full well that the fall of snow would make it impossible for reinforcements to come from India. When Shahjahan learnt of these preparations, he took counsel with his nobles on the subject, and they advised him to postpone the campaign until the winter was over. The emperor accepted their advice, and the result was that the forces of the Shah, careless of the rigour of winter, marched against the fort. The Mughal garrison fought with desperate courage for 57 days, but when they saw that no relief was coming from India, they capitulated on February, 11, 1649. The court chronicler Inayat Khan has related the circumstances which led to this ignominious surrender. He writes:

> "At length a number of the garrison, from want of spirit, lost the little courage they possessed, and Shadi Uzbek, having entered into a conspiracy with the Kazalbashis, seduced Kipchak Khan (a Mughal officer) from his duty. Though the latter was not naturally inclined at heart to this course of behaviour, yet as his companions had their families with them, through dread of losing their wealth, their lives, and their good repute, they would not let him follow the bent of his own disposition, so he was necessarily compelled to ally himself with those unfortunates. Some of the Mughal mansabdars, ahadis, and matchlockmen, too, having sprinkled the dust of treason on the heads of loyalty, entered into a league with them, and, having come in front of the fort, declared that in consequence of all the roads being closed, from the vast quantity of snow on the ground, there was no hope of the early arrival of

succour, and that it was evident from the untiring efforts of the Kazalbashis, that they would very shortly capture the fort, and after its reduction by force and violence neither would there be any chance of their own lives being spared, nor of their offspring being saved from captivity. The wretched Daulat Khan, who ought instantly to have extinguished the flames of this sedition with the water of the sword, showed an utter want of spirit by contenting himself with offering advice in reply. This, however, made no impression on the individuals in question, who got up, and departed to their respective homes, so that nought but a scanty force being left in the intrenchments, the Kazalbashis entered the Sher Haji in several places."[54]

If the commander of the garrison Daulat Khan had held out a little longer the Persians would have raised the siege owing to shortage of supplies. But he was wanting in the higher qualities of generalship; he failed to enforce discipline among his men and divided counsels fatally hampered his action. But the real responsibility for the fall of Qandhar rests upon Shahjahan and his ignorant courtiers, who were more anxious to protect themselves from snow than to serve the interest of the empire in a difficult and dangerous crisis.

First Siege of Qandhar, 1649.

The emperor sent a large army consisting of 60,000 horse and 10,000 foot under the command of Prince Aurangzeb who was accompanied by Sadullah Khan. The army largely consisted of the Saiyyds of Bārha, Uzbegs, Afghans, and Rajputs, and its heterogeneous character induced the emperor to make some concessions to the soldiers. A subsidy of Rs. 100 per *Sawar* was granted to mansabdars, holding jagirs, and to those

[54] Shahjahannamah, Elliot, VII, p. 91.

who were drawing monthly salaries three months' pay was given in advance. A similar aid was granted to the ahadis and matchlockmen who numbered about fifty thousand. These liberal concessions were obviously intended to keep the army satisfied and to mitigate the suffering that might be caused by the shortage of supplies, if it occurred.

Aurangzeb marched from Multan and Sadullah Khan from Lahore towards Kabul, from whence they were to advance upon Qandhar *via* Ghazni. The emperor himself crossed the Chenab in Rabi I, 1059 (=April 1649) and proceeded to Kabul to direct the operations in person. After a fortnight's stay at Kabul, which was utilised in purchasing horses and beasts of burden, the seven divisions of the imperial army marched towards Qandhar. On reaching the city they found that the Persians had strongly fortified themselves against attack. They had a large number of field pieces whereas the Mughals had only a few. With this advantage on their side, the Persians opened fire on the enemy, and the Mughals found it impossible to make headway against their heavy ordnance. Still Rustam Khan did his part well, and attacked the centre of the Persian army and killed a large number of men.

After a futile siege of 3 months and 20 days Aurangzeb was ordered by Shahjahan to withdraw from Qandhar. The departure of the Prince was accelerated by the approach of winter and the news that a force of 20,000 was coming from Persia to the relief of the beleaguered garrison at Qandhar.

Second Siege of Qandhar, 1652.

Aurangzeb was mortified by the defeat which he had sustained at the hands of the Persians. The prestige of the empire had fallen low, and the Prince must needs exert himself to the utmost to retrieve his reputation which was seriously damaged by the first siege.

Shahjahan, grown wiser by the failure of the first siege, organised a large invading force, which consisted of 50 thousand horse and 10 thousand foot. New cannon were cast for the siege, and the troops carried with them to the front 30 cannon of big size and 20 smaller ones. Besides these, there were war-elephants and camels together with a huge transport, which was specially got together for the siege. The emperor granted two crores of rupees for defraying the expenses of the war, and himself proceeded to Kabul with nearly 50 thousand men to reinforce the invading host. Prince Aurangzeb was appointed to the commad, and he was assisted by generals like Sadullah Khan, Rustam Khan, and two sons of the former.

The siege began on the 2nd of May, 1652, and the Mughal commanders occupied the places allotted to them. The Persians had a powerful park of artillery and knew how to make the best use of it. The Mughal gunners were highly inefficient, and therefore failed to breach the walls of the fort. Raja Raj Rup tried to climb the ramparts of the fort, but the enemy opened fire and repulsed the valiant Raja. A serious fight began from the top of the fort. The Persians continued ceaselessly to pour fire on the besieging army with the result that hundreds were wounded and killed. When valour proved unavailing, the Mughals had recourse to treachery. They offered a bribe to the Persian commander, who replied that when they had succeeded in weakening the fort or injuring the garrison in any way, it would be time for him to think of desertion. The Mughals failed in spite of their desperate attempts to effect a breach in the wall, and though two months and eight days had elapsed, success was yet as far off as ever.

Shahjahan ordered the siege to be abandoned, partly because the Mughal artillery had proved ineffective, and partly because the supplies were nearing exhaustion. Sadullah Khan had spoken to him of the dark prospect that lay before the

Mughal army, if it persevered in the attempt. Aurangzeb implored his father to allow him to renew his attempt to capture Qandhar and to recover his reputation. He was prepared even to forego the Deccan Subahdarship to which he was appointed. What he wished to do was to wipe out the disgrace of defeat and to foil the intrigues of his enemies at court, who made jests about his valour and strategical skill.

But Shahjahan was adamant. The courtiers had magnified the risks of the campaign, and he paid no heed to Aurangzeb's repeated assurances that the situation was not so hopeless. The Prince had to obey, and the imperial forces withdrew to Kabul under the strict orders of the emperor. The conquest of Qandhar was postponed.

So far as Aurangzeb was concerned the result of the failure was serious enough. Shahjahan's confidence in his generalship was shaken. When Aurangzeb had begged permission to stay a little longer the emperor replied: "If I had believed you capable of taking Qandhar, I should not have recalled your army. Every man can perform some work. It is wise saying that 'men of experience need no instruction.'"

Aurangzeb was appointed governor of the Deccan and he left for his charge in August 1652. The province of Kabul was entrusted to Dara and Prince Sulaiman Shukoh was ordered to act as his agent.

Third Siege of Qandhar, 1653.

Dara rejoiced over the defeat of his rival, and, in order to humiliate him further, he requested the emperor to renew the siege of Qandhar. Like a braggart, he boasted that he would accomplish within a week the conquest of the Persian city which had baffled the attempts of Aurangzeb. Actuated by a desire for military distinction and more by his hostility towards his brother, Dara, who shortly afterwards received the title of Shah Buland Iqbal, exerted himself to the utmost to make grand preparations for the siege.

The strength of Dara's army is fully described by Inayat Khan, the author of the *Shahjahannamah*. It consisted of 70 thousand horse supplied by the mansabdars, 5 thousand foot, 3 thousand ahadis, and 10 thousand artillery men, 6 thousand sappers and 500 stone-cutters. Arms and ammunition were supplied in abundance. More attention was paid to the artillery branch and a fairly good park was provided consisting of about 60 cannon, big and small. The *Mir Atish* got 50 thousand cannon-balls manufactured and stored up 5,000 *mans* of gunpowder, 2,500 *mans* of lead, and 14,000 rockets. War-elephants numbering sixty were also procured, and adequate arrangements were made for supplies. The emperor, who was deeply interested in the success of his favourite son, granted one crore of rupees for defraying the expenses of the campaign, and supplied him with a huge army. Fully equipped with men and munitions of war, the Prince miscalled Shah Buland Iqbal, started for Kabul on November 22, 1652 A.D. (Rabi I, 3, 1063 A.H.). Rustam Khan, Bahadur Najabat Khan, and Qasim Khan had already preceded him at the head of 3,000 horse, which constituted the vanguard of the royal army with instructions to begin the siege promptly. On the 2nd Jamad II Rustam Khan reached the fort, and had a sharp skirmish with the Persian garrison. The prince joined them on the 8th, and pitched his camp in the neighbourhood of the fort which was surrounded on all sides by the imperialists.

The Mughals attacked the fort four times with great intrepidity and vigour, but they were successfully encountered by the enemy. They advanced forward for the fifth time with renewed determination and courage. A heavy cannonade began from both sides, and the Mughals suffered heavy losses in men, and several of their leaders were slain in the fight.

Dara had all along lived in a fool's paradise. Accustomed to the most fulsome flattery, he found it impossible to appraise exactly the magnitude of the formidable task that lay before

him. Man and nature conspired to frustrate his schemes in this expedition with the cruel inevitableness of a nemesis.

The siege had already lasted for seven months and the Mughal army was seized with despair. The supplies were running short ; the cannon-balls were used up, and there was no fodder for the cattle. Privation stared the soldiers in the face, and the approach of winter further added to their anxiety. Besides, the dissensions of the Mughal generals disturbed all plans of action and increased the difficulties of the situation still further.

The three sieges of Qandhar cost the imperial treasury about 12 crores of rupees without increasing the territory of the empire by an inch. Men and beasts were thoughtlessly sacrificed to gratify the vanity of an emperor who had no well-organised plan of campaign, and who failed to realise the importance of the unity of command and prompt action. The military prestige of the empire suffered considerably. The final retreat of Dara proclaimed to the world the military inefficiency and weakness of the Mughals. Success against the mighty emperor of Hindustan roused new hopes in Persia and lent a keen edge to her ambitions. Throughout the seventeenth century the danger of a Persian invasion kept the rulers of Delhi in a state of chronic anxiety and suspense. Ultimately, it was the irresistible pressure of these invasions that accelerated the ruin of the empire.

Aurangzeb's Viceroyalty of the Deccan.

Aurangzeb assumed charge of the governorship of the Deccan in November 1653, in obedience to his father's command. During the nine years that had elapsed since his resignation in May 1644, the condition of the Deccan provinces had grown from bad to worse. The imperial viceroys, who had succeeded the Prince in rapid succession one after the other, squeezed money from the peasantry in a pitiless manner and did nothing to promote agriculture. Whole

tracts of land became desolate under this tyrannous policy, and since there was nothing to attach the peasant to the soil, there was a marked decline in the revenue of the state. The Deccan became a source of inconvenience rather than income to the empire. Its administration cost more than the yield of the soil. The large force that was stationed there for the maintenance of peace and order was paid from the imperial treasury, and the governors found it impossible to make any remittances to the capital. The estimated revenue of the four provinces of the Deccan was 3 crores and 62 lakhs of rupees a year, but in practice the realisations seldom amounted to more than one crore. Large sums were consumed by the governor and his sons, who held jagirs with the result that the cost of administration had to be met by contributions from the other provinces like Malwa and Gujarat. Only one governor tried to send money to the imperial treasury, but he did so by rack-renting the peasantry. In short, the province was in a state of decay ; the land was sucked dry, and the deficit continued to increase from year to year so that the new viceroy found himself confronted with a serious financial situation.

Aurangzeb's difficulties.

When Aurangzeb reached the Deccan, he found that the jagirs did not yield enough to maintain the office and their retainers. New fiefs were granted to enable them to pay their way in a remote and unproductive region. The income of the state was at a low ebb. The actual collections sometimes amounted to only one-tenth of the assessment. Even in the most fertile districts there was a fall in the revenue. Aurangzeb found it impossible to carry on the administration with his slender resources, and therefore had to draw on the cash reserves accumulated in the forts of Daulatabad. In two years he spent about 40 thousand from this source to meet the needs of the administration.

The low cash balances were a cause for grave anxiety. Besides, the Jagirdars could not maintain themselves with the income of their fiefs. Aurangzeb suggested to the emperor that he should be given productive jagirs which were then in the hands of his incompetent officers. Shahjahan agreed to this suggestion, but the Jagirdars complained to him of the selfish motives of the Prince, and represented his efforts, made solely for the good government of the province, as devices to enrich himself at the expense of the other fief-holders. Aurangzeb explained his position and the emperor confirmed the new arrangement. The transfer of jagirs was sanctioned, but Aurangzeb's request for monetary assistance was rejected. The dispossessed Jagirdars created a misunderstanding between the father and son by complaining to the former that the prince had unfairly treated them, and that he had appropriated to himself lands yielding much more than his actual pay. Like all autocrats, Shahjahan lent a ready ear to these backbiters and indignantly wrote to Aurangzeb :

> "It is unworthy of a Musalman and an act of injustice to take for yourself all the productive villages of a pargana and to assign to others only the less productive lands. I order you to take half a lakh worth of less productive land in the pargana of Asir, and decrease your cash by the same amount, so that your actual income may be made normal."

Aurangzeb addressed a dignified remonstrance to the emperor, and pointed out the injustice of the allegations made against him. The Prince, whose ability was equalled by his devotion to duty, was not to be cowed down in such a manner by the frowns of the emperor or the machinations of vile intriguers.

As soon as the financial situation was well in hand Aurangzeb devoted himself with his wonted energy to the

amelioration of the condition of the peasantry and the extension of cultivation. Shahjahan, who did not appreciate the difficulties of the task, charged him with slackness, and at one time even threatened to reduce his allowances. But the Prince persevered in his attempt, and in this work he was assisted by Murshid Quli Khan, an officer of rare administrative genius.

Murshid Quli Khan's Revenue System.

The Deccan province was divided into two parts for the purposes of revenue administration—the Painghat and the Balaghat. In the former were included the whole of Khandesh and one-half of Berar, while the rest of the territories were comprised in the latter. Both divisions had their own Diwans who collected the revenue and looked after their finances. Murshid Quli Khan, the Diwan of Balaghat, was not merely a financial genius, but a great administrator endowed with the highest capacity for organization and zeal for reform.

Murshid Quli Khan introduced Todarmal's revenue system in the Deccan. Amins and Amils were appointed to measure the land, to ascertain the area under cultivation, and to mark out the arable from waste lands. Muqaddams were appointed in the villages who helped in the collection of revenue, and looked after the interests of the peasantry. Loans were advanced to poor cultivators to purchase seed and cattle, and they were permitted to repay them by instalments. So anxious was the Diwan for justice that he did not grudge the meanest labour and " often dragged the measuring chain with his own hands." The chaotic revenue system that was in vogue rested on no principle and put the state to a heavy loss. The whole thing was reorganised with the necessary modifications which were suggested by local conditions. Altogether there were three systems which were adopted by Murshid Quli. The old practice of fixing the share of the state per plough was retained in certain backward areas with due allowance for difference in soil and the yield thereof. It was a rough and ready system

involving risks both to the state and the peasant. The other system involving was the *Batāi* which was determined in the following manner :—

(1) The share of the state was one-half, where the crops depended entirely on rainfall.

(2) In places where irrigation was done by wells, the state took one-third both for the *Kharif* and *Rabi* crops. But in the case of grapes, sugarcane, and other high-class crops the share of the state varied from one-ninth to one-fourth with full regard to the facilities or difficulties of irrigation and the length of time taken by the crops to mature.

In lands irrigated from canals, tanks, or river channels, the share of the state was fixed sometimes at a higher rate and sometimes at a lower rate than in lands irrigated otherwise.

(3) The third method of assessment was that which prevailed in Northern India. This was called *Jarīb*. The land was surveyed, and the state demand was fixed per *bigha* according to the nature of the crop sown.

This carefully organised system worked well and resulted in the improvement of agriculture. The peasantry lived a happy and contented life and were no longer at the mercy of the revenue department. Much high-handedness and oppression came to an end, and the Deccan provinces attained a high level of prosperity.

War with Golkunda.

As has been said before, one of the avowed objects of Mughal policy in the Deccan was the destruction of the kingdoms of Golkunda and Bijapur. Their vast wealth excited the cupidity of the emperors of the north, and their independence stank in their nostrils. Then, they professed the Shia creed which

amounted to rank heresy in the eyes of the orthodox Sunnis. In several *farmans* and letters Shahjahan had made it abundantly clear to the Sultans of these two kingdoms that the extirpation of Shia dissent was a matter of religious duty with him, which he must discharge to the best of his power. Apart from this general aspect of Mughal policy towards the Deccan States there were other causes. The Sultan of Golkunda had not paid his tribute, and had always evaded the imperial demand with dilatory pleas. Aurangzeb informed him that if he was unable to pay the arrears of tribute he should cede to the Mughal government a portion of his territory in lieu thereof. The conquest of Karnatik by the Sultan of Golkunda was not approved by the emperor, and a heavy sum of money was demanded to at once for the alleged crime. But what precipitated the crisis was the treatment, meted out by the Sultan to his minister Mir Jumla, who sought the protection of the emperor to escape the wrath of his sovereign.

Career of Mir Jumla.

Mir Muhammad Saiyyid, better known to fame as Mir Jumla, was a native of Ardistan and belonged to the Saiyyid family of Isfahan. Like many other adventurers, he came to India as the servant of a jewel merchant who brought him to Golkunda. After the death of his master, who treated him as his own child, Mir Muhammad inherited his vast fortune which brought him into prominence. Success in business, resulting in his unequalled prosperity, attracted the attention of Abdullah Qutbshah, the ruler of Golkunda, who made him his prime minister. Endowed with uncommon qualities of character and intellect Mir Jumla, who had an inborn aptitude for administration and military leadership, rapidly secured his master's favour, and was entrusted by him with the most important duties.

He conquered the Karnatik which had so long baffled the Mughals, and inflicted a severe defeat upon the Raja of

Chandragiri. He increased his wealth enormously by plundering the temples of the Deccan and by working the mines, which existed in his master's territories. He carved out for himself by sheer force of arms a dominion 150 *Krohs* in length and 20 or 30 *Krohs* in breadth, yielding a revenue of 40 lakhs of rupees a year. For the defence of his wealth and possessions, he had built up a considerable army consisting of 5,000 well-trained cavalry and 20,000 infantry, in addition to the troops of Golkunda which he had seduced. He had a strong park of artillery and a number of war-elephants. This was truly an *imperium in imperio* and, no wonder, if the Sultan of Golkunda was alarmed at the rise of a formidable rival, who was sure to challenge his authority and create disorder in his kingdom.

Mir Jumla's enemies at court successfully poisoned the mind of the Qutbshah and planned his ruin. The author of the *Shahjahannamah* observes with regret that, in spite of the meritorious services he had rendered to the state, Mir Jumla had to suffer cruel disappointments.[55] But the Sultan is not wholly to blame. Any man in his position would have resented the over-bearing attitude which was adopted by the minister. The easiest method of ensuring his safety suggested itself to the Sultan. He conspired with some of his courtiers to put Mir Jumla in prison and blind him, but Mir Jumla got wind of his designs, and refused to wait on his master in spite of the latter's importunities. He opened communications with the Sultan of Bijapur and the Shah of Persia, whose assistance he invoked in this hour of distress. Aurangzeb judged it a good opportunity to offer his aid to the discontented nobleman. Mir Jumla, on his part, negotiated with several allies without coming to a decision. At last matters were brought to a

55 Shahjahannamah, Elliot, VII, p. 108.

crisis by the insolence of his son Muhammad Amin, who went so far as to insult the Sultan in the open Durbar. The Sultan whose forbearance was too sorely tried found Amin's arrogance intolerable. An order was passed forthwith to throw into confinement the imprudent youth and his family and to get hold of his property, on November 21, 1655.

This was done without exciting any surprise or indignation at Golkunda. But Aurangzeb turned this incident to his best account. He informed Shahjahan of these developments, and sought his permission to interfere in the affairs of Golkunda. The emperor peremptorily issued an order asking the Qutbshah to release the family of Mir Jumla, and authorised Aurangzeb to march an army against the Sultan in the event of non-compliance. The ambitious prince who was fired by a fanatical hatred of the Shia powers did not wait for the Qutbshah's reply and declared war against him.

Aurangzeb sent his son Prince Muhammad at the head of a large army on January 10, 1656, and himself joined soon afterwards. "Abdullah Qutbshah," the court chronicler writes, "awoke from his deep sleep of arrogance and conceit" and released Mir Jumla's son with his mother and other relatives. He also sent a letter to the emperor offering submission, and expressing his willingness to pay homage.

Invasion of Golkunda.

Yet the Prince pushed on towards the capital on the pretext that the Sultan had not restored the property of Muhammad Amin. Qutb-ul-mulk at the approach of the imperial army proceeded to Golkunda with his family, leaving the capital to be defended by a valiant force consisting of 17,000 soldiers. He removed his precious treasures also to Golkunda, and charged his chief officers to encounter the enemy without fear or cowardice.

The arrival of the Mughal forces frightened the Sultan, who felt 'more helpless than a child and more unnerved than

a woman.' His officers waited on the prince with jewels and gems but to no purpose. The Mughals plundered the city, and rifled the rich treasures which the Qutbshahs had hoarded during successive generations. The soldiers were warned not to molest the inhabitants of the city or to destroy their property. Abdullah again sent 200 caskets full of gems and jewelled trinkets together with well-decorated horses and elephants in the hope of appeasing the prince's wrath. Costly presents continued to pour in on the prince, but they had no effect on him. While making these overtures, the Sultan did not neglect the defences of Golkunda, and despatched letters to the Adil Shah (Sultan of Bijapur) to aid him in his struggle with the Mughals.

The imperialists laid siege to Golkunda. Aurangzeb was charmed by the wealth and fertility of the capital, and coveted its possession more than anything else. 'Such a money-yielding country, unmatched by the imperial dominions,' he wrote to his father, 'has fallen into this wretch's hands,' and urged him to order its complete conquest and annexation. He further implored the emperor not to pay attention to the Qutbshah's requests for peace and pardon, nor to Dara's recommendations on his behalf.

The siege of Golkunda continued with unabated vigour, and sharp skirmishes were fought between the two parties. Aurangzeb's maternal uncle Shayasta Khan came from Malwa to reinforce Prince Muhammad, and both made a determined effort to annihilate the enemy's kingdom. Qutb-ul-mulk, finding further resistance impossible, offered submission and sued for peace. Rich presents were sent by him as tokens of sincerity, and money too was sent in part payment of the arrears of tribute. Shahjahan who was more influenced by the recommendations of Dara and Jahanara than by Aurangzeb's appeals to orthodoxy, ordered the cessation of hostilities on payment of a heavy indemnity.

Abdullah begged permission to send his mother to secure pardon for his offences and to consult Aurangzeb on the subject of his daughter's marriage with Prince Muhammad. The 'Chaste Matron' was escorted with becoming honour and dignity to Shayasta's camp. An interview was arranged with Aurangzeb, and the lady pleaded for kindness to her son. Aurangzeb agreed to restore the kingdom to Abdullah on condition that he should pay one crore of rupees as indemnity and arrears of tribute, and consent to Muhammad's marriage with his daughter.

Meanwhile Abdullah's agent at the imperial court succeeded in winning for their master the sympathies of Dara and Jahanara. The pitiless condition of the Sultan was explained to the emperor, and Aurangzeb's treachery and low cunning in pressing on a fallen enemy were laid bare before him with the embellishments and exaggerations of a sworn enemy. It is true that Aurangzeb had behaved treacherously throughout the campaign, and had shown no generosity towards his opponents. Shahjahan was moved to indignation by the cruelty of his son. Forthwith he ordered him to raise the siege of Golkunda and leave the country without further delay.

Treaty with Golkunda.

Aurangzeb obeyed the imperial command, and concluded a peace with the Sultan of Golkunda. After a weak, Prince Muhammad was married to the Qutbshah's daughter by proxy, and the bride was escorted to her husband's camp by his Diwan and the royal Bakhshi. Costly jewels and presents worth ten lakhs were sent as dowry by her father. The Sultan swore on the Quran that he would never disobey the emperor in future, and gratefully received the imperial *farman* containing an assurance of pardon and the rich *Khilat* bestowed upon him by the emperor. Aurangzeb relented, and remitted 10 lakhs out of the 25 lakhs of indemnity, which had been promised by the

Sultan. Further remissions were made a little later, and certain districts were also ceded. Golkunda's humiliation was complete ; henceforward it became a vassal of the Mughal empire.

Mir Jumla received at court.

Mir Jumla waited on the emperor and was received well at court. His presents to the emperor which included a valuable diamond were worth 15 lakhs. The title of Muazzam Khan was bestowed on him along with a *mansab* of 6,000 *Zat* and 6,000 *Sawar*, and he was appointed Prime Minister in Sadullah's place. His eldest son Muhammad Amin was similarly honoured and was given the title of Khan.

War against Bijapur.

Aurangzeb now turned his arms against Bijapur. The campaign of 1636 had been abruptly brought to a close, and Bijapur had been allowed to exist as an independent state. Muhammad Adil Shah, who was reputed for his justice and benevolence, maintained friendly relations with the emperor of Delhi. But his exercise of sovereignty deeply offended Shahjahan, who reminded him in a letter of the humble practices of his forefathers, and rebuked him for his presumptuousness. The Sultan was warned not to imitate the ways of Mughal royalty. The Bijapur warriors, when they learnt of the contents of this insulting letter, requested their chief to adhere to his court ceremonial and titles, and expressed their determination to cross swords with the Mughals, if the emperor persisted in his insolent demand. This decision, taken in a moment of tense excitement, was soon given up by Adil Shah who clearly visualised the horrors of a Mughal invasion. He apologised to the emperor for his mistake and offered submission. Muhammad Adil Shah died on November 4, 1656, after a glorious and prosperous reign of 30 years, and was succeeded by his son Ali Adil Shah II, who was a mere lad of 18 at the time of his accession to the throne.

As soon as Aurangzeb came to know of the accession of the boy-king at Bijapur, he wrote to Shahjahan begging him to order an invasion of that country on the ground that the new king was not really a son of the deceased Adil Shah, but a boy of spurious origin, raised to the throne by court intriguers. The disorders of the kingdom, caused by the death of the late Sultan, further encouraged Aurangzeb in his hostile designs. Shahjahan granted his request, and permitted him 'to settle the affair of Bijapur in any way he thought fit.' The Mughal forces in the Deccan were to be reinforced by a fresh levy of 20,000 soldiers under the command of well-tried officers, and Mir Jumla who knew the country well was ordered to assist the prince in his campaigns. The emperor desired merely the conquest of Bijapur, while Aurangzeb thirsted for its annexation. The milder course suggested to the prince that he should leniently deal with Bijapur, if the Adil Shah paid one and a half crores as indemnity and recognised Mughal suzerainty in the approved manner, did not appeal to him, and he pushed on his preparations for attack. He sent an express to Mir Jumla to join him without delay.

The war was unjust. The historian of Aurangzeb thus describes the *casus belli*:

> "The war thus sanctioned was wholly unrighteous. Bijapur was not a vassal state, but an independent and equal ally of the Mughal Emperor, and the latter had no lawful right to confirm or question the succession at Bijapur. The true reason of the Mughal interference was the helplessness of its boy-king and the discord among his officers, which presented a fine 'opportunity' for annexation, as Aurangzeb expressed it."[56]

Mir Jumla and Aurangzeb with their combined forces marched in the direction of Bijapur, and on reaching Bidar

[56] Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, I, p. 237.

laid siege to it. The city of Bidar had a strong fortress, 4,500 yards in circumference and 12 yards in height. It was surrounded by thick deep ditches each 25 yards deep, hewn out of the solid rock. Inside the fort were many palaces, baths, pleasure gardens and a number of public offices built by the munificence and devotion of successive monarchs. It was well-fortified and possessed a large supply of arms and ammunition. No wonder, if the men of the middle ages looked upon it as an impregnable fortress.

The Qiladar of the fort was Sidi Marjan, an old Adil Shahi officer, who had under his command 1,000 horse and 4,000 foot including musketeers, rocket-men and gunners. Accompanied by Muazzam Khan, Aurangzeb went to survey the position and settled the plan of attack. Sidi's men opened fire from the bastions of the fort, but the imperialists pushed forward in spite of the shower of shot and shell, and reached the ditch which they began to fill up. Several sorties took place in which the advantage lay alternately with the Bijapuris and the Mughals. But in the end, the Mughals by their superiority in numbers carried the day. They were helped by an explosion of powder magazine in the fortress, which destroyed a large number of Bijapuris. Sidi Marjan and two of his sons were badly burnt. Bewildered by this disaster, the garrison conveyed their heroic commander and his sons to the citadel. The Mughals, taking advantage of this unfortunate incident, made a dash into the fortress, and 'killed or bore down all who resisted, and raised the flag of victory.' Sidi Marjan, who was mortally wounded, saw no alternative but to submit to the invaders. He sent his sons with the keys of the fort to Aurangzeb who received them with befitting honour. Thus was the fort of Bidar taken after a siege of 27 days. The imperialists seized a large booty consisting of 12 lakhs of rupees in cash, 8 lakhs worth of lead, powder, and other ammunition, besides 250 pieces of ordnance.

Aurangzeb entered the city in triumph, and caused the Khutba to be read in the name of the emperor of Delhi in the historic mosque of the Bahmanids, the silent witness of a hundred political revolutions. The gallant Sidi Marjan died of his wounds soon afterwards.

The Bijapuris, anxious to wipe out the disgrace of defeat, began to collect their troops at Gulburga. Aurangzeb sent Mahabat Khan with 15 thousand well-equipped horsemen to deal with the enemy. A party of 2,000 men advanced within six miles of the Mughal camp, and seized the bullocks of the Banjaras, which were used as means of transport for carrying grain and fodder. Mahabat's men rushed forward in great haste and released the cattle. The Bijapur forces numbering 20,000 under their famous generals Khan Muhammad, Afzal Khan, and others delivered a bold attack on the Mughals, which was successfully repelled. The Mughals closely pursued the vanquished army, and many of the fugitives were slain in the attempt to escape.

Shortly after this victory Aurangzeb arrived at Kalyani, the ancient capital of the Chālukyas, 40 miles west of Bidar. The town was besieged, and day and night the garrison poured fire upon the imperialists from the walls of the fort. Mahabat Khan, assisted by Rajput valour, succeeded in breaking up the ranks of the enemy, and Ikhlas Khan drove them back with heavy losses. The fight continued, and the two armies engaged each other in a death-grapple. The battle lasted six hours, and the Deccanis, following their customary tactics, baffled and harassed the Mughals, but in the end they were overpowered by the Hindustani horsemen. The enemy suffered heavy losses, and Aurangzeb rejoiced at the success of his generals.

The siege was pushed on with great vigour. The defence was bravely conducted by Dilawar Khan, the Abyssinian commander, whose men rained on the besiegers naphtha-balls,

burning grass and lighted gunpowder from the walls of the fort. Fighting raged furiously on both sides. At last, when Dilawar saw that further resistance was useless, he offered to surrender the fort on condition that the governor and the garrison should be allowed to depart from the fortress with their families and goods in safety. The keys of the fortress were surrendered to the Mughals on Zilqadah 1, 1068 A.H. = 21st July, 1658 A.D., and once again the Prince caused the Khutba to be read in the emperor's name.

The Mughals had captured Bidar and Kalyani and were ready to march upon Bijapur, when an order was received from the emperor that the campaign should be stopped. The emissaries of the Sultan at court had persuaded the emperor to change his mind, and Shah Buland Iqbal's jealousy of his able brother had worked to the same end. Shahjahan committed a blunder ; he did not fully realise what Aurangzeb's diplomacy, courage, and cunning had achieved in the Deccan. But nothing can justify this war of aggression, which was prompted solely by the love of conquest and the greed for gold.

Peace was made with the Sultan. He agreed to pay 1½ crores of rupees as indemnity and to surrender to the Mughals the forts of Bidar, Kalyani and Parenda. Shahjahan graciously remitted half a crore from the indemnity, and spoke approvingly of the settlement of peace. Aurangzeb was commanded to return to Bidar and the other officers to withdraw to their respective charges.

Sadullah Khan Allāmī's death, 1656 A.D.

Sadullah Khan, surnamed 'Allāmī,' the premier nobleman of the empire, died on Jamad II, 22, 1066 A.H. (7th April, 1656). For about four months he had been suffering from a severe attack of colic pain, but his devotion to duty was so great that 'for the first two months he used to attend daily in the auspicious presence and uttered no exclamation

of pain.' All medicines failed to cure the fatal disease and at last he succumbed to it. The emperor expressed deep regret at the passing away of such a loyal and capable minister and generously treated his survivors.

Life and Death of Ali Mardan Khan.

Ali Mardan Khan was the son of Ganj Ali Khan, who was descended from the Kurdish tribe of Zig in Persia. Originally Ganj Ali occupied the humble position of chief servant under Shah Abbas, but by dint of merit and his gallant fight against the Uzbegs he rose to honour and eminence. His devoted services to the state won him the title of *Arjamand Baba* (honoured father), and the Shah signified his confidence by entrusting to him the governorship of Kirman. When Shah Abbas captured Qandhar during Jahangir's reign, he made over the fort to this veteran officer. After Ganj Ali's death in 1625, which was caused by an unhappy accident, the Shah allowed his son Ali Mardan to inherit his honours and dignities, and conferred upon him the title of *Baba Sani* (Baba, the second).

But Shah Abbas's death caused a great change in policy. His successor laid his hands heavily upon the supporters of the late *régime*, and Ali Mardan was one of those who apprehended peril to their lives. Forthwith he began to strengthen the fortifications of Qandhar in self-defence and opened negotiations with Shahjahan. The Shah flew into a raged, when he heard of Ali Mardan's treason, and resolved on his destruction. Ali Mardan solicited Mughal protection, and offered to surrender the fort of Qandhar as its price.

A tempting offer of this kind was enough to gratify Shahjahan's vanity. He was filled with joy at the golden prospect of obtaining without war or bloodshed a fortress against which his father had striven in vain. The Persian governor's wish was granted, and he was enrolled among the

Panjhazari grandees of the empire, and subsequently the rank of 7,000 *Zat* and 7,000 *Sawar* was conferred upon him.

The battles and sieges in which Ali Mardan Khan took part, along with the scions of the royal house, have been described before. The Balkh expedition was a disastrous failure, but the responsibility for it rests in no small degree upon the emperor, who often disturbed the plans of his generals and neutralised their efforts by his ill-timed interference. Though Ali Mardan was not a highly successful military general, his talents shone conspicuously in the field of civil administration. He was given charge of the Subah of Kashmir—an important province on the Northern frontier of the empire, and he ruled it wisely and well for several years. As minister of the state, his advice was sought in the weightiest matters, and his wise and sagacious counsels were seldom rejected. His greatest achievement was the canal which was constructed mainly through his efforts. His love of beauty and natural scenery, which he had cultivated in Persia and Kashmir, led him to plan the Shalimar gardens on the bank of this canal, which are still the favourite resort of men, desirous of snatching an interval of quiet repose from the din and strife of life, and of tourists from all parts of the world. The gardens were beautifully laid out, and a number of reservoirs and fountains were constructed to add to their loveliness at a cost of eight lakhs of rupees under the supervision of Khalil-Ullah Khan.[57] As the canal did not supply sufficient water for the gardens, a lakh of rupees was advanced from the treasury of which fifty thousand were recklessly spent only on repairs. Then, under expert advice steps were

[57] Abdul Hamid writes in the *Padshahnamah* that the gardens took 1 year 4 months and 5 days to be completed and cost 6 lakhs of rupees. The two parts of the garden were called *Farahbakhsh* and *Faizbakhsh*.

taken to improve the irrigation, and the gardens began to get an unfettered supply of water.[58]

Ali Mardan Khan was called away from his Subah of Kashmir towards the close of 1656, but the heat of the plains seriously affected his health. He had an attack of dysentery, and was therefore allowed to go back to his charge to enjoy the bracing climate of the happy valley. But before he reached his destination, he died at Machiwara on April 16, 1657, and his body was brought to Lahore where it was buried in his mother's tomb. His vast wealth amounting to a crore of rupees was confiscated by the state in accordance with the law of escheat.

Shahjahan was a magnificent monarch. During his reign he constructed a number of noble edifices which exist to this day. But in no way less important was the Peacock Throne on which he lavished large sums of money out of the public treasury.

The Peacock Throne.

In course of time, writes Abdul Hamid Lahori, precious jewels of great value had collected in the royal treasury, and Shahjahan intended to utilise them so that 'sight-seers might share the beauty of those products of the mine and ocean, and also that a fresh glory might be added to the Sultanate.' The object of the emperor was twofold: to exhibit his hoard of precious jewels and to augment the grandeur of the empire. Setting apart the jewels which were in the private apartments of the emperor, an order was passed that out of the jewels valued at two crores, which were in the outer palace in the custody of Khan Zaman, some exquisite jewels worth 86 lakhs of rupees

58 It is stated in the *Masir-ul-Umrah* (English Trans., Vol. I, p. 193) that 5 Krohs of the old canal were preserved and 32 new Krohs were made. The *Padshahnamah* says the same thing.

should be picked up and made over to Bebadal Khan[59] the *darogha* of the goldsmith's department, together with one lakh tolas of gold valued at 14 lakhs of rupees for the purpose of constructing a throne 3¼ yards in length, 2½ yards in width, and 5 yards in height. The outside of the canopy was to be inlaid with rubies and cornelians, while the inside was chiefly made of enamelled work with gems studded here and there, and it was to be supported on twelve emerald pillars. On each pillar there were two peacocks[60] inlaid with gems and between every two peacocks there was a tree set with rubies, diamonds, emeralds and pearls. The ascent to the throne was made by three steps which were thickly studded with jewels. The middle one of the planks (*takhts*) which were on all sides of the throne—the plank on which his Majesty used to rest his arm—was worth ten lakhs of rupees. Among the jewels with which it was decked, there was a ruby valued at one lakh, which had been sent by Shah Abbas to Jahangir through Zanbil Beg, and which Jahangir had given to Shahjahan in recognition of the military successes achieved in the Deccan.

59 Bebadal Khan's real name according to the *Masir* was Saidi Gulani. He was a poet. He came to India in the time of Jahangir and was included among the court poets. He rose to fame during Shahjahan's reign and obtained the title of Bebadal Khan (incomparable lord). He held the office of the Darogha of the goldsmith's department for a long time.

Masir, I (Eng. Trans.), pp. 396-97.

Prof. J. N. Sarkar in his *Studies in Mughal India* (p. 18) writes that out of the jewels (worth two crores), in the outer palace, the very best valued at 16 lakhs were chosen. Abdul Hamid clearly says 86, and he is supported by the *Mulakkhas* and other authorities. 16 is obviously a misprint.

60 Tavernier (I, pp. 383-84) speaks only of one peacock for he says: 'On both sides of the Peacock Throne there is a large bouquet of the same height as the bird, and consisting of many kinds of flowers made of gold inlaid with precious stones.' The Muslim authorities speak of more than one, and there is no reason to doubt their statement in regard to this matter.

On this were inscribed the names of Sahib Qiran Timur, Mirzas Shahrukh and Ulugh Beg, Shah Abbas, Jahangir, and Shahjahan. The throne took seven years to be completed and cost one crore of rupees.[61]

Haji Muhammad Jan Qudsi composed a poem in praise of the throne the last three words of which (اورنگ شهنشاه عادل) give the date (1044 A.H.—1634 A.D.) of its construction.[62]

The Peacock Throne was carried by Nadir Shah at the time of his invasion of India. The throne no longer exists in Persia. Lord Curzon's enquiries revealed the fact that the *Takht-i-Tāūs* of Persia is not an Indian throne at all. It was constructed by Muhammad Husain Khan, Sadr (High Priest) of Isfahan, for Fath Ali Shah, when the latter married a young Isfahani lady whose popular name was Tāūs Khānim or the Peacock Lady. The original Peacock Throne of Shahjahan was recovered in a broken condition from his grandson Shah Rukh, and its portions were made up into the throne of modern style which now stands in the New Museum in the palace of Tehran.

Shahjahan's daily life.

The emperor rose early in the morning 2 *gharis* before sunrise, and after performing his prayers began the day's work. First, he went to the Jharokha (window) to show himself to his subjects who gathered in large numbers below the fort to

61 As regards the cost of the throne Tavernier says, ' Those who keep the account of the King's jewels, and of what this great work has cost, have assured me that it amounts to one hundred and seven thousand lakhs of rupees.' This is incredible. It is very much greater than the figure mentioned in the *Padshahnamah* of Abdul Hamid.

Cal. text, 1, Pt. II, pp. 78-79.
Masir-ul-Umra, I, pp. 396—99.
Mulakkhas, p. 79.
A. U., U. MS.

62 Haji Muhammad's poem is reproduced *in extenso* in the Archæological Survey Report, Vol. 1911-12, pp. 18-19.

have a glimpse of their sovereign. From there he proceeded to the Hall of Public Audience where the distinguished officers of the state were presented to him and received Khilats and rewards. Petitions from *mansabdars* in the provinces were laid before the emperor, and often he wrote on them orders with his own hand. Having finished his work in the Hall of Audience, the emperor went to the Daulat Khanah-i-Khas, called the Ghusal Khanah in Akbar's time, where he scrutinised the orders of his officers, and examined jewellery and plans of buildings submitted to him for approval. After this he went to the Shahburj where business of a confidential nature was transacted, and only a few trusted officers were admitted.

At about midday the emperor retired to the *haram*, but business followed him there also. Mumtaz Mahal placed before him the petitions of orphans, widows, and other destitute persons, and the emperor graciously granted them stipends and allowances. In the latter part of the day the emperor transacted business again in the Hall of Public Audience and the Shahburj.

Having spent a strenuous day in work, which must have not a little taxed his physical and intellectual powers, the emperor retired to his private chambers, and here for a couple of hours he enjoyed the performances of women singers. It was now time to go to bed. Books on history, travel and the lives of prophets were read to him from behind a curtain till sleep was induced. He was particularly fond of the *Zafar-namah* and the *Waqiát-i-Babari* (*Babar-namah*) which were read to him every day.

Shahjahan's Buildings.

Shahjahan was a magnificent builder. A detailed account of his buildings will be given later in describing the development of the Mughal art under his patronage. It will suffice here to make a bare mention of the various edifices constructed by him. The most beautiful of all his buildings is, of course, the Taj.

minor building in the vicinity of the capital as well as beyond its limits. The tomb of Nizamuddin Auliya was built of pure white marble, and situated in a cosy corner away from the din and bustle of life, it still inspires alike the devout pilgrim and the lover of art. At Ajmer Shahjahan built a number of buildings. On the embankment of the Anāsāgar lake constructed by Anaji, the Hindu king at Ajmer, Shahjahan built in 1637 A.D. a marble platform 1,240 feet long and five pavilions (*baradaris*) of polished marble and a *hammam* or Turkish bath. Besides these Shahjahan showed his devotion to Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, whose shrine was deeply revered by his ancestors, by building a splendid dome and a Jam-i-Masjid to the west of the tomb in 1638. Though inferior in beauty to the Pearl Mosque which the emperor built at Agra, it is a beautiful and ornamental addition to the mausoleum.

Shahjahan's administration.

According to Abdul Hamid Lahori, Shahjahan's empire extended from the Lahiri port in Sindh to Sylhet in Assam, a distance of 2,000 Krohs (5,000 yards) and from the fort of Bist in the Afghan region to Ausa in the Deccan a distance of 1,500 Krohs. It contained 22 subahs which yielded an income of 880 crore dams (=22 crores of rupees).[64] The general framework of the machinery of government was the same as under Akbar, though modifications were made by Shahjahan to suit his convenience. The administration was still of a feudal and

[64] The 22 subahs of the empire are as follows :—

1. Delhi.	9. Khandesh.	17. Thatta.
2. Akbarabad.	10. Ahmedabad.	18. Kabul.
3. Lahore.	11. Oudh.	19. Balkh.
4. Ajmere.	12. Bihar.	20. Qandhar.
5. Daulatabad.	13. Multan.	21. Badakhshan.
6. Allahabad.	14. Telingana.	22. Kashmir.
7. Berar.	15. Orissa.	
8. Malwa.	16. Baglana.	

military type, and Shahjahan maintained a huge army for the maintenance of his power. But he treated his subjects well, and Tavernier describes him as ruling over his subjects with a mildness uncommon among sovereigns. He punished his nobles when they neglected their duties, and arranged all things for the comfort of the people who cherished a genuine affection for him.[65] The *mansab* and *jagir* system pervaded the empire. The imperial service contained men of various nationalities, whom the Great Mughal 'raised to dignities or degraded to obscurity according to his own pleasure and caprice.'[66] These officers were paid both in cash and *jagir*, but they were invariably in debt owing to the costly presents they had to make to the emperor[67] and the large establishments of wives, servants, camels and horses. The law of escheat weighed heavily upon them, and the dark prospects of their descendants after their death always haunted their minds.

The most important source of the income of the state was the land revenue. Shahjahan enjoined on his officers the duty of looking after the interests of the ryot, but his instructions were not faithfully observed. A story is related of him which illustrates his solicitude for the well-being of the peasantry. One day, while the emperor was examining the records of the revenue department, he found that in a certain village the revenue had increased by a few thousands. Forthwith he asked his high *diwan* Sadullah Khan to explain the cause of this increase. The minister who had been poring over the papers in his office day and night appeared before the August Presence with his eyes still dozing and replied that owing to a change in the course of the river a piece of land had been added, which increased the cultivated area of the village. The

65 Travels, I, pp. 343-44.

66 Ibid., p. 212.

67 Bernier's Travels, p. 213.

emperor enquired if the land in question was *khalsa* or *aima* (rent-free grant), and it was found that it belonged to the latter class. At this Shahjahan exclaimed in wrath: 'The water over that tract of land has dried in response to the lamentations of the orphans, widows, and poor (of the place) ; it is a divine gift to them, and you have dared to appropriate it to the state! If a desire to spare God's creation had not restrained me, I should have ordered the execution of that second Satan, the oppressive *Faujdar* (who has collected revenue from this new land). It will be enough punishment to dismiss him as a warning to others to refrain from such wicked acts of injustice. Order the excess collections to be immediately refunded to the peasants entitled to them.'[68]

The anecdote whether true or not clearly illustrates that in popular estimation Shahjahan was known as a just and generous ruler, and was always anxious to protect the interests of his subjects. His *diwan* Sadullah had a high conception of his duties. He used to say that a *diwan* who was unjust towards the peasant was a demon sitting with a pen and inkpot before him. Besides the land tax the state levied a number of *awabs*, which were afterwards abolished by Aurangzeb. These may be roughly classified under the following heads :—

1. Duties on the sale of produce.
2. Duties on the sale of property.
3. Fees or commissions of the state and perquisites of officials.
4. License tax on trades and professions.
5. Forced subscriptions, gifts, and services.
6. Imposts on the Hindus. Tax on bathing in the Ganges and other sacred waters. The Mughal government charged Rs. 6 and 4as. from every

68 Sarkar, Mughal Administration, p. 82.

pilgrim at Allahabad. Tax on carrying the bones of dead Hindus for being thrown into the Ganges.

The administration of justice was carried on by the Qazis and Miradls, but the emperor was not unmindful of his own duty in the matter. As the Khalifa of the age, he was the highest judge in the empire, and appeals in important cases were made to him. The emperor did not go to the Jharokha-i-Khas-o-Am on Wednesday, which was set apart for administering justice. On that day at the appointed hour the emperor came straight from the Jharokha-i-Darshan to the Hall of Audience, popularly known as the Ghusalkhanah, and disposed of the cases that were submitted to him by the Daroghas. The emperor sought the advice of the *Ulama*, who expressed the view of the *Shariyat* and gave their verdict.

The cases which required local investigation were sent to the provincial governors with instructions to find out the truth and to do justice and submit their report on them. The author of the Lubb-ut-Tawarikh, who was a Hindu intimately acquainted with Shahjahan's reign, highly praises his administration of justice, and says that judgments were awarded with great care and discrimination.

Manucci corroborates the Hindu writer, and records several instances in which Shahjahan interfered to vindicate the claims of justice.[69] Even the highest officials were punished when their wrongs were brought to light. Once, it is said, certain actors sought the king's permission to stage a play. Their request was granted, but the performance exposed the iniquities of the governor of Gujarat. The emperor exclaimed in utter amazement: 'Can there be a man in the world to do such wrongful acts? ' Enquiries were made, and when the allegations against the governor were proved, he was condemned to lifelong imprisonment in the fort of Rohtasgarh, and his effects

69 Storia do Mogor, I, p. 197.

were seized.[70] Bernier writes that the power of the local authorities over the peasantry was so absolute that there was no one before whom the injured peasant, artisan, or tradesman could lay his complaints. It may have been so in the remoter parts of the empire, but wherever the eye of the emperor could reach, wrongs were righted and justice was done. There was no craze for litigation, and even Bernier admits that there were few lawsuits, fewer lawyers, and justice was expeditious.[71] The anecdotes related by Manucci of Shahjahan's rigorous justice present his character in a highly favourable light.

The punishments inflicted upon the culprits were barbarous. Minor offences were punished with the mutilation of limbs, whereas for the more serious crimes death and imprisonment for life were laid down as penalties. Peter Mundy speaks of great barbarities practised by provincial satraps, and there is no doubt that some of them were cruel and savage.[72] But to generalise about the whole administration from the cruelties of one or two governors would be hardly justifiable.

The Mughals were essentially an urban people. They derived their revenue from the villages, but as Professor Jadunath

70 Storia do Mogor, I, pp. 198-99.

71 Bernier, p. 361.

72 The traveller speaks of *chor minars* (tower of skulls for thieves) which he saw with his own eyes. This punishment was intended to banish theft from the country, and the result was undoubtedly wholesome.

Manucci (I, pp. 197—208) relates several instances in which Draconian punishments were inflicted upon the culprits. Some of them are obviously incredible. Nobles and commoners were punished alike for their misconduct, and the emperor freely laid his hands upon those who acted against his wishes or oppressed his poor subjects. A Hindu clerk, whose wife was forcibly seized by a soldier, appealed to the emperor for protection. The slave girl was sent into the palace, and the emperor asked her to put water into the inkpot which she did with great cleverness. The emperor who watched the manner of the girl in doing the errand felt convinced that she belonged to the scribe, and dismissed the claim of the soldier and banished him from the city.

Sarkar remarks, they dreaded them as a punishment. The provincial government was largely government of the Capital cities of the provinces. The Subahdar acquainted himself with the condition of the villages through the *Faujdar* and the officers of the revenue department and by paying personal visits to the rural areas, but so far as governmental activity was concerned, the villagers were left to themselves and were taken no notice of as long as they did not disturb the public peace. The chief officers who controlled and guided the administration of the provinces were (1) the Subahdar, (2) the provincial Diwan,(3) the Faujdar, (4) the Kotwal, and (5) the Waqianavis. Their functions have been described in a previous chapter.

The accounts of European travellers throw a lurid light upon Shahjahan's provincial administration. Peter Mundy describes the governors as cruel and capricious tyrants who acted callously in their dealings with the people. The governor of Patna, Abdullah Khan, ill-treated Mundy, connived at peculation, and levied customs duties even upon milk-sellers.[73] At Benares the traveller saw a man hanging on a tree by the heels—a punishment inflicted for disobeying the royal edict about the demolition of temples.[74] Between Biyana and Fatehpur Sikri during the years 1632-33 he saw 250 or 300 men set on stakes by Mirza Lashkar, the governor, who recked nothing of human lives.[75] The customs duties were levied in many places, and thieves abounded in the country, and made the highways unsafe for traffic from Agra to Ahmadabad. The country was a barren desert, and no meat or drink was procurable and there were no *Sarais*.[76] The *chor minars* of which Mundy speaks have already been alluded to before.

[73] Travels, II, p. 160.

[74] Ibid., II, p. 178.

[75] Ibid, II, p. 234.

[76] Ibid., II, p. 264.

Mandelslo has drawn a similar picture. Bernier who reached India towards the close of Shahjahan's reign speaks of provincial governors as petty tyrants, possessing boundless authority. There was none to whom the oppressed subject could appeal and he had no hope of redress 'let his injuries be so grievous or ever so frequently repeated.'[77] True, the *Waqianavis* were there to inform the emperor of the doings of the governor, but there was 'generally a dangerous collusion between these officers and the governor,' with the result that the wrongdoers escaped unpunished, and tyranny continued to be practised without let or hindrance. Manucci who praises Shahjahan's severe justice contradicts Mundy in one important point. He gives a long account of the *Sarais* and their management. There were *Sarais* throughout the empire, which could accommodate 800 to 1,000 persons with their horses, camels, carriages and their guards.[78]

The accounts of European travellers are in conflict with one another, and it would be unfair to generalise about the administration as a whole from their observations. It may be conceded at once that punishments were severe, and that provincial governors must have acted in certain places like tyrants, but it would be unfair to conclude from this that there was grinding oppression throughout the country. The author of the *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh* writes that Shahjahan employed intelligent and capable officers, showed affection towards the people, examined the accounts himself, and tried to promote the welfare of the agricultural population in every way. The prosperity of the empire increased, and the pargana which had an income of 3 *lakhs* in the time of Akbar now yielded 10 *lakhs*. Manucci also clearly states that the emperor removed just grievances and severely punished his governors,

[77] Bernier, p. 231.

[78] Storia do Mogor, I, pp. 68-69.

when they oppressed the people. The Muslim citizens lived in ease and comfort, and though agricultural labourers, who were mostly Hindus, were not so well off, it should be borne in mind that Shahjahan's buildings must have afforded ample occupation to artisans, masons, and labourers, who were brought together from different parts of the country. In times of famine the emperor did much to alleviate human suffering. When a severe famine occurred in the Punjab in the 19th year of the reign, the emperor issued an order that the children sold off by starving parents should be purchased at the expense of the state, and again made over to them. Ten public kitchens were opened at Lahore by the imperial command, where food was distributed gratis to the famished population.

No clear line of demarcation can be drawn between the civil and military departments. The *mansab* and *jagir* were the determining factors in the administration, but the correspondence between the *mansab* and the number of horsemen indicated by it had ceased by the time Shahjahan came to the throne. The *Zat* and *Sawar* ranks still continued, but it is positively certain that the figures of the rank did not imply that a particular *mansabdar* kept the number prescribed by his *mansab*. To check fraudulent practices Shahjahan revised the branding (*dagh*) regulations. An officer in the Subah to which he was appointed was required to have 1/3rd of his horses branded, and if he was deputed on state duty in another province in Hindustan 1/4, *i.e.*, in the first case a *mansabdar* holding rank of 3,000 *Zat* and 3,000 *Sawar* was required to get 1,000 horses branded, and in the second case only 750. The number to be branded in the case of officers who were sent to Balkh and Badakhshan in time of war was fixed at one-fifth, owing to the difficulties of the journey and the rigours of the climate.

According to Abdul Hamid Lahori the imperial army in 1648 consisted of 2,00,000 cavalry, 8,000 *mansabdars*, 7,000

ahadis or gentlemen troopers, 40,000 foot musketeers and artillery men and 1,85,000 cavalry under the princes and nobles, making a total of 4,40,000. Besides these there were troops in the parganas under the command of the *Faujdars, Kroris*, and *Amils*, and therefore the strength of the royal army must have been considerably greater than the figure stated above. The various branches of the army continued to work as before, and there was no dearth of fighting material and during the Qandhar campaign special efforts were made to secure it by the government. Dara carried with him to Qandhar a large army consisting of four heavy guns, 30,000 ironshots, great and small, 1,500 *mans*, 5,000 *mans* of gun-powder, 5,000 artillery men, 10,000 musketeers, 6,000 pioneers, sappers and axemen, 500 *pakhalis*, 3,000 *ahadis*, 60 war-elephants and a great number of Banjaras for transport.

Though numerically the army of Shahjahan was very large, its efficiency was by no means proportionate to its numbers, as is shown by its repeated failures against Qandhar and the disaster that followed the Balkh campaign.

On the whole then it may be affirmed that Shahjahan exercised his sway in a beneficent manner. Tavernier writes that the police was so strict in all things and particularly with reference to the safety of the roads that there was no necessity for executing a man for having committed theft.[79] Both Muslim and Hindu chroniclers agree in saying that the country was prosperous. The emperor possessed enormous wealth, which enabled him to adorn his capital cities with noble edifices which stand to this day.[80] Abdul Hamid Lahori writes that

[79] Travels, I, p. 325.

[80] Shahjahan spent 9½ crores of rupees in rewards and gifts in the first twenty years of his reign and more than three millions on his buildings. Bernier writes (p. 223) that Shahjahan never amassed six crores of rupees, although he was a great economist. He does not include in his estimate

Shahjahan had jewels worth ten crores at the time of his accession. Out of these he spent jewels worth two crores in gifts and rewards and about 50 lakhs worth in medicines. In 1644 he had in his possession jewels worth five crores in the Jawahar Khanah-i-Inam and had two rosaries valued at 20 lakhs of rupees.

From the vast riches of the emperor the people at large derived no small benefit. Shahjahan's love of magnificence created numberless facilities of employment. The state promoted industries, and in its workshops at Lahore, Agra, Fatehpur, Ahmadabad, Burhanpur and Kashmir costly fabrics of great beauty were made for the use of the royal family and the officials. Bernier speaks of *Karḳhanahs* in the fortress where goldsmiths, painters, varnishers, tailors, shoe-makers, manufacturers of silk, brocade and other pieces of cloth exhibited their skill and power of invention.[81] Still, labour in the bazars was not free, and the traveller observes that the artisans were not adequately paid by the Omrah, who sometimes applied the *Korah* instead of paying wages.[82] The Hindu merchants were well off, but many of them in the country districts concealed their wealth and buried it deep in the ground. In the cities the merchants had considerable influence with the government. Śānti Dās, a wealthy Jain merchant of Ahmadabad who built a large temple in 1638, enjoyed the favour of the court and was given the title of Nagar Seth.[83]

the gold and silver articles of various kinds, covered with precious stones, pearls and other valuable stuff. Bernier forgets that Shahjahan had spent lavishly on wars and buildings.

81 Travels, p. 259.

82 Ibid., p. 256.

83 Foster, English Factories, 1634—36, p. 196.

Shahjahan's Illness.

On the 6th September, 1657, Shahjahan fell ill of strangury and constipation and was confined to bed. After a week he appeared in the Jharokha to allay the public disquietude caused by the rumour of his death, but weakness persisted, and even the physicians did not feel sanguine about his recovery. Knowing death to be a certainty, the emperor made his last will and testament, and commended his eldest son, Dara, to his nobles and officers and asked them to look upon him as their sovereign lord. He advised the Prince so to order his conduct as to please God, to cherish his subjects, and to look after the welfare of the peasantry and army. The affairs of the state were managed by Dara in the emperor's name, but the atmosphere was surcharged with suspicion, and to the distant parts of the empire the news travelled with lightning speed that Shahjahan was no longer alive, and that Dara was concealing the fact of his usurpation of sovereign power. With the advice of his physicians, Shahjahan left for Agra for a change of air on the 18th October, and took up his abode in the Agra fort, where he was to pass the remainder of his life as a captive in the hands of his ambitious son.

Shahjahan's family—Character of the Princes.

Shahjahan had four sons, Dara, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad, and two daughters, Jahanara, known as the Begum Sahib, who was a strong partisan of Dara, and Raushanara, who backed the claims of her third brother and kept him informed of everything that went on in the palace.

Dara, who had just completed his 42nd year, was a man of eclectic views in religious matters. He freely associated with Muslim Sufis and Hindu Vedāntists, listened with equal interest to the doctrines of the Talmud and the New Testament. With the help of Brahman scholars he translated the *Upanishads* into Persian, and attempted to discover a *modus vivendi* between irreconcilable doctrines which divided

mankind into hostile groups.[84] To him there was no difference between the essentials of Islam and Hinduism. His lack of sympathy with the orthodox point of view was enough to damn him in the eyes of the champions of bigoted Sunnism, and, no wonder, if Aurangzeb could successfully rally the hatred and spite of his co-religionists against him.

Dara was his father's favourite. He had always lived at court, and though polite in conversation and affable in manners, he had not acquired the qualities of a statesman. Power and wealth had engendered in him much conceit of himself and rendered him disdainful of advice, even when it was offered by his well-meaning friends. He was ignorant of the art of war, and had never won laurels on the field of battle. The flattery of courtiers had blinded him to his faults, and seriously impaired his capacity for correct judgment. In an open encounter, he had no chance of success against a practised warrior and consummate diplomatist like Aurangzeb..

Shuja was an intelligent man of refined tastes. He was not lacking in courage, but he was a slave to his pleasures, and like most other high-born youths of his age frittered away his time in the company of women in the *haram*. No

[84] Dara was no apostate from Islam. Aurangzeb's manifesto pointed out the following facts :—

(*a*) He conversed with Brahmans, Yogis and Sannyasis and looked upon them as spiritual guides. He regarded the *Veda* as a divine book and studied it.

(*b*) He wore rings and jewels on which was inscribed in Hindi letters the word Prabhu or Lord.

(*c*) He discarded the Ramzan and other observances of the faith.

He wrote a number of works some of which are the following :—

1. *Sirr-ul-asrār* which is a translation of the *Upanishads*.
2. *Safinat-ul-Aulia* which is a hagiological treatise containing the lives of Muslim saints.
3. *Majmua-ul-Bahārin*, a treatise on the technical terms of Hindu pantheism and their Sufi synonyms.

business of state could draw him away from his drinking bouts, and no courtier could remonstrate with him regarding the follies which he practised unabashed. The climate of Bengal had undermined his bodily strength, and made him incapable of strenuous exertion. But he was not wholly devoid of mental power, and in times of crisis he could display a strength of will and resourcefulness, which took his contemporaries by surprise.

Aurangzeb was the ablest of Shahjahan's sons. He lacked the affable manners and the tolerant spirit of Dara, but his judgment was sound, and he had a great capacity for discerning the character of men with whom he had to deal. He was a perfect master of the art of dissimulation, and not even his most intimate friends could fathom the depth of his heart, when he chose to be reserved and incommunicative. He was well-versed in politics, and had acquired considerable experience of administration. He was essentially of a religious turn of mind, and was the only man who could successfully lead the Sunni opposition to Dara's genuine liberalism.

Murad was a fool in politics. His one thought was pleasure, and he left nothing undone to satisfy his grosser appetites. He was frank to a degree, despised intrigue, and prided himself on his utter lack of secrecy. But his character had other traits which deserve to be admired. He was generous and amiable, and extended his favours to those who served him, but in doing so he did not act with discrimination. He was not wanting in courage, and his love of ease vanished at the sight of an enemy arranged in battle array. Regardless of risk, he would rush into the thick of the fight and satiate his fury by the slaughter of his opponents. But he lacked the qualities of leadership, and his personal daring was not of much use against well-organised armies, controlled and guided by commanders of ability, foresight, and capacity for combination. Bernier is wrong in saying that he would have

remained the undisputed master of Hindustan if his courage had been under the guidance of a little more discretion.

The rumour of Shahjahan's death spread all over the empire, and since there was no law of succession among the Mughals, the rival claimants appealed to the arbitrament of the sword. During the emperor's illness, Dara remained by his side, and transacted all public business in his name. 'To safeguard his own interests,' writes Khwafi Khan, 'he exacted pledges from ministers not to publish what passed in council and closed the roads of Bengal, Ahmedabad and the Deccan against messengers and travellers. The Amirs, Zamindars, and ryots resented Dara's impolitic action, and turbulent spirits in all parts of the country 'raised their heads in expectation of strife.'[85]

War of succession begins.

When the news reached the provinces, Murad and Shuja assumed the imperial title in Gujarat and Bengal respectively, and had the coins struck and the *Khutba* read in their names. Dara feared Aurangzeb most, and he had already persuaded the emperor to recall the nobles and generals who had been sent to assist him in the siege of Bijapur. Murad collected a large army, and sent a contingent of 6,000 horse to plunder the port of Surat which was an appanage of Jahanara Begum, and slew her *Diwan* Mir Ali Naqi with his own hand.

Aurangzeb played a waiting game. He rebuked Murad for his precipitate action and asked him to wait till the news of Shahjahan's death was confirmed. But Murad urged that the results of delay would be fatal. They entered into an agreement in order to partition the empire between themselvs. Murad was to take the northern provinces, *i.e.*, the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Sindh, and the rest were to belong to Aurangzeb. Dara was denounced as a *Kafir*, and

85 Elliot, VII, p. 214.

Aurangzeb expressed his firm resolve to free the country from his evil influence. The partition treaty was solemnly agreed to, and God and the Prophet were made witnesses to it. Murad marched out of Gujarat and joined Aurangzeb in the environs of Dipalpur near Ujjain. The combined forces then proceeded towards Ujjain and encamped at the village of Dharmat, ready to give battle to the enemy.

Shuja crowned himself at Rajmahal and started for Delhi at the head of a large army, which included also a fleet of boats. He ravaged the districts of Bihar and reached Benares on January 24, 1658. Dara sent an army under his son Sulaiman Shukoh and Raja Jaisingh Kachwaha to deal with Shuja. The imperial army met Shuja's force at Bahadurpur, five miles north-east of Benares and defeated it. Shuja fled from the field of battle and hastily embarked for Bengal.

Shuja's advance.

Dara had also sent an army under Maharaja Jaswant Singh and Qasim Khan to deal with the combined forces of Murad and Aurangzeb. Attempts were made on both sides to avert the war but in vain. At Dharmat the two armies engaged each other in a death-grapple, but the Rajputs were defeated and Jaswant Singh fled to Marwar where he found the castle gates shut against him by his proud wife, because unlike a Rajput he had fled from the field of battle to save his life. Dara recalled Sulaiman Shukoh from Bihar but he arrived too late.

The battle of Dharmat, April 15, 1658.

The entire blame for this defeat does not rest with the Raja. He had under his command an army which was a heterogeneous mass without cohesion or common loyalty. The Rajputs,, belonging to different clans, were swayed by considerations of privilege and precedence, and did not render ungrudging obedience to the commands of their leader. The Hindus and Muslims had their own differences, and their

separatist tendencies destroyed the unity of command which was essential to success. The Muslims scorned to fight under Hindu leadership, and thus within a single army there were seen two co-ordinate authorities, which fatally hampered the plans of each other. Besides these inherent drawbacks, the imperial army was weakened by the intrigues which its own officers carried with Aurangzeb.

The victory at Dharmat increased Aurangzeb's prestige and brought to him much treasure and fighting material. The victorious prince proceeded towards Gwalior, and after crossing the Chambal encamped near the plain of Samugarh.[86]

Battle of Samugarh, 29th May, 1658.

When Dara heard of the crushing defeat of Jaswant Singh's army, he was completely unnerved. Shahjahan, who had started for Delhi on April 11, 1658, to escape the heat of the Agra summer, returned from Bilochpur to Agra, where vigorous efforts were made to crush Aurangzeb. He was opposed to war, but he did not assert himself and take steps to nip the strife in the bud. He was so completely in Dara's hands that he did not stir out to allay the suspicions of his sons, who were tired of their elder brother's mischief. At last Dara's army which numbered about 50,000 reached the plain of Samugarh towards the close of May, and arranged itself in battle array. The Rajputs formed the vanguard, the left and right wings were commanded by Siphir Shukoh, Dara's younger son, and Khalilullah Khan respectively, while

86 Prof. J. N. Sarkar identifies Samugarh with Samogar, a small village eight miles due east of Agra Fort.

According to Bernier Samugarh is the modern Fatehabad, 21 miles south-east of Agra, where he found a Sarai and a mosque called the *Mubarak Manzil*.

The author of the *Khulasat*, who is a contemporary, writes that Agra was ten Kos (20 miles) from the battlefield. Tradition strongly supports the view that Samugarh is the modern Fatehabad.

in the centre was posted Dara himself, seated on a lofty elephant covered with barbed steel. The numbers of Dara's army are no index to its strength and efficiency. He was not a great general himself, and his commander Khalilullah Khan was one of those men whom intrigue can seduce and gold can buy. The Rajputs after the fashion of their tribe followed their own tactics, and did not act in harmony with Muslim soldiers. Aurangzeb's forces were led by tried warriors both Hindu and Muslim, who had proved their valour in many an arduous campaign, and his artillery was better organised than that of his opponent. With these advantages on Aurangzeb's side the issue of the battle was a foregone conclusion.

The battle began with a heavy discharge of rockets and guns, and thousands of arrows were hurled from both sides. Siphir Shukoh and Rustam Khan with 10 or 12 thousand horse rushed with great force towards Prince Muhammad and caused much confusion in the army, but a ball from the enemy's guns struck Rustam's elephant, which instantly fell on the ground. Rustam withdrew in fear of further attack, but reinforcements on both sides again made the contest warm. Rustam Khan was defeated and Siphir Shukoh was driven back.

Mortified by Rustam's discomfiture, Dara led the centre which consisted of 20,000 horse against the victorious wing of the enemy but he was repulsed. This was followed by a terrific attack of the Rajputs upon Prince Murad. The elephant of Murad was about to run away from the field, but a chain was thrown round his legs to fix him to the spot where he stood. Raja Ram Singh Rathor dashed at the elephant of Murad and cried out: "What! do you contest the throne with Dara Shukoh?" Then the Rajputs rushed upon the elephant, but they were cut down and their robes 'made the ground as yellow as a field of saffron.'

Aurangzeb and Murad both displayed unexampled courage in fighting, and inflicted heavy losses on Dara's men.

In great despair Dara got down from his elephant and mounted a horse without arms but the sight of the empty *howdah* caused a panic in his army, and the result was a general stampede from the field. Aurangzeb obtained a clear victory and received congratulations from all sides. Dara and Siphir Shukoh, dumbfounded by their defeat, took the road for Agra where they reached late in the night.

Aurangzeb entered Dara's camp and seized all his baggage and artillery. He offered congratulations to Murad on the acquisition of sovereignty and appointed skilled surgeons to dress his wounds.

Dara's flight towards Agra.

No words can adequately describe Dara's miserable plight at this time. Most of his adherents, tormented by thirst and heat, gave up the ghost in despair on entering the town. He was so ashamed that he did not go even to see Shahjahan, who was deeply touched by his defeat. An express was sent to Delhi to order the local governor to place all the treasure in the fort at Dara's disposal. But all this availed nothing against the relentless pressure of fate and the vindictive fury of Aurangzeb.

Aurangzeb's march towards Agra.

After his victory the Prince started for Agra and encamped in the *Bagh-i-Nur* outside the town from where he sent a petition (*arzdasht*) to the emperor, begging to be excused for the war which was forced upon him by his enemies. Shahjahan who was anxious to make the best of a bad job sent him a sword named Alamgir, which was looked upon as a good omen, and expressed a desire to see him. But Aurangzeb's friends told him that the emperor had formed a plot to take his life. They pointed out to him that it was necessary for his safety that Shahjahan should be imprisoned. The proposal was welcome to Aurangzeb who at once sent Prince Muhammad to remove the imperial guards and take

possession of the fort. The siege began, and the imperialists defended themselves with great gallantry, but when the water supply from the Jamna was cut off, they surrendered.[87] The old emperor was forced into seclusion of the *haram*, where none but a few private servants were allowed to speak to him. His dearly loved daughter Jahanara shard his captivity and served him with unequalled devotion. She tried to bring about a reconciliation between father and son, but her efforts failed. A secret letter written by the emperor to Dara, asking him to stay at Delhi, was betrayed into Aurangzeb's hands, and his suspicions were fully confirmed. He felt convinced of the emperor's duplicity and turned a deaf ear to all counsels of peace and conciliation.

Imprisonment of Murad.

Aurangzeb was now *de facto* master of the empire. He held a grand *Darbar*, and his officers and men saluted him as their liege-lord. But Murad felt dissatisfied with his brother's attitude. He gathered round him a force of 20,000 men and began 'to assert his own will.' When Aurangzeb left for Delhi, Murad followed him and added to the confusion of the time by setting up a new rivalry. But Aurangzeb was equal to the occasion. At Mathura he invited Murad to a feast which he heartily enjoyed. Wine, Murad's greatest foible, proved a fatal snare. Dead drunk, he fell asleep, and in a short time found himself a prisoner in his brother's hands. Gold fetters were thrown round his legs, and he fretted and fumed with the impotent rage of a caged tiger, and heaped curses

87 Shahjahan was compelled to quench his thirst in the scorching heat of June with bitter well-water. He wrote a pathetic letter to Aurangzeb in which the following verse occurs :—

Praised be the Hindus in all cases,
As they ever offer water to their dead.
And thou, my son, art a marvellous Musalman,
As thou causest me in life to lament for (lack of) water!

To this Aurangzeb's reply was, "It is your own doing."

on Aurangzeb for violating his solemn oaths on the Quran. The captive Prince was sent to the fort of Gwalior, where, after some abortive attempts at escape he was tried for the murder of his *Diwan*, Ali Naqi, and condemned to death. The Qazi's verdict was forthwith executed, and the unhappy Prince was murdered in his prison cell (December 4, 1661), and his body was buried in the fort.

Aurangzeb continued his march towards Delhi where on July 21, 1658, he crowned himself as emperor, and assumed the title of Alamgir (' world compeller '). The usual rites of coronation were postponed to a later occasion.

Dara's last attempt.

Dara did not stay long at Delhi. He fled to the Punjab, where he thought he might escape from the clutches of his mortal enemy. But the latter followed close upon his heels and compelled him to seek refuge in Gujarat. The Governor of Ahmedabad received him well, and placed at his disposal ten lakhs of rupees, which belonged to Murad. With this money he raised a force of 20,000, and once more decided to grapple with Aurangzeb. Raja Jaswant Singh Rathor invited Dara to hasten towards Ajmer and promised him support, Dara forthwith set out on his journey, but his hopes were dashed to the ground when he learnt that Jaswant had been won over by Aurangzeb. Through the good offices of Raja Jai Singh the Raja's offences were forgiven by Aurangzeb, and he was reinstated in his *mansab*. Dara appealed to the Raja to honour his plighted word but his entreaties produced no effect. At last he resolved to hold the pass of Deorai and was defeated by Aurangzeb's army.

Flight to Dādar.

Dara again sought refuge in flight. He fled towards Gujarat, but the followers of Aurangzeb allowed him no rest. He reached Ahmedabad, but the governor refused him permission to enter the town. Driven from pillar to post, the unfortunate

Prince proceeded towards Dādar, to seek shelter with the Baluchi Chief, Malik Jiwan, whom he had once saved from the imperial wrath. Bernier writes that his wife, daughter and his son, Siphir Shukoh, implored him on bended knees not to go to the Pathan Chief, but Dara did not believe it possible that he would be betrayed by a man 'bound to him by such strong ties of gratitude.'[88] The journey to Dādar was a terrible misfortune. Dara's wife, Nādirā Begum, the unhappy lady who had shared her husband's vicissitudes with a fidelity which compels our admiration, died of diarrhœa on the way, and her body was sent to Lahore to be buried according to her wish. "Mountain after mountain of trouble," writes Khwafi Khan, "thus pressed upon the heart of Dara, grief was added to grief, sorrow to sorrow, so that his mind no longer retained its equilibrium." The Baluchi Chief, instead of giving him shelter, betrayed him into the hands of Aurangzeb's generals. Dara was stunned by this act of crowning treachery, but he was powerless against his evil destiny which frustrated all his plans and turned friends into foes. Both father and son were made captives and taken to Delhi, where they reached on August 23, 1659.

Dara's disgrace.

The news of Dara's capture filled Aurangzeb's heart with joy, but he carefully concealed his feelings. When it was confirmed, he odered him to be brought out of prison and subjected to unspeakable disgrace. The Prince was paraded on a filthy elephant with his son, Siphir Shukoh, through the streets of Delhi. What a terrible ordeal it must have been to one who had entered that city many a time at the head of stately processions, decked in all the magnificent trappings of Mughal royalty ? It was a spectacle which aroused pity in the stoniest hearts, and

88 Bernier, Travels, pp. 95-96.

Bernier, who was an eye-witness, has described the scene in these words :

> ". . . and everywhere I observed the people weeping, and lamenting the fate of *Dara* in the most touching language. I took my station in one of the most conspicuous parts of the city, in the midst of the largest bazar ; was mounted on a good horse, and accompanied by two servants and two intimate friends. From every quarter I heard piercing and distressing shrieks, for the Indian people have a very tender heart ; men, women, and children wailing as if some mighty calamity had happened to themselves. Gionkan (Malik Jiwan) rode near the wretched Dara ; and the abusive and indignant cries vociferated, as the traitor moved along, were absolutely deafening. I observed some *fakirs* and several poor people throw stones at the infamous *Patan* ; but not a single movement was made, no one offered to draw his sword, with a view of delivering the beloved and compassionate Prince. When this disgraceful procession had passed through every part of *Delhi*, the poor prisoner was shut up in one of his own gardens, called *Heider-Abad*."[89]

Dara's noble qualities did not desert him even in this hour of misfortune. Manucci relates that when the Prince was in front of the fortress, a *faqir* shouted to him : 'O Dara ! when you were master, you always gave me alms ; today I know well thou hast naught to give me.' The Prince responded to the beggar's wish, drew off his dingy, dark-coloured shawl from his person, and threw it down to the *faqir*. But Bahadur Khan, Aurangzeb's general who had arrested him, ordered the shawl to be seized, saying that a prisoner had no right to give anything.[90]

89 Khwafi Khan says Khairabad, Bernier, Travels, pp. 98—100.

90 Storia do Mogor, I, p. 355.

What was to be done with Dara ? His fate was hotly discussed in the Hall of Private Audience. Danishmand Khan pleaded that his life might be spared, but Shayasta Khan and others urged that he was a Kafir, and death was the only fit punishment for infidelity. They were strongly supported by Raushanara, whose hatred for her fallen brother was not extinguished even by his terrible sufferings. The convenient plea of *Kufr* was turned to the best account. The *Ulama* gave the verdict that Dara was an apostate from Islam and therefore deserved to die. The judgment was merely an echo of Aurangzeb's real inclinations, and he decided to destroy Dara both on the ground of infidelity and public necessity. Dara looked about for help in all quarters, but what hope was there when no pity could be found in a brother's breast ? His petition for mercy to Aurangzeb only brought the callous answer that 'a usurper and mischief-maker deserved no pardon.' The populace was sympathetic, but it could do nothing to save him. A riot occurred in the streets, and Malik Jiwan's life was perilously threatened. The disgrace of the newly ennobled traitor only accelerated the doom of his hapless victims.

Dara's tragic fate.

The atrocious duty of murdering Dara and his son was assigned to Nazr, a ruffianly slave, utterly devoid of human feelings. When he tried to separate Dara from his son, who was confined in the same room, the two clasped each other in a tight embrace and shrieked aloud with grief. Dara attacked the slave with a small knife which he had concealed under his pillow, and struggled to save himself, but he could not resist single-handed his ferocious assailants who were used to commit such bloody deeds. In a few minutes the ghastily tragedy was over and the room became perfectly still.

Dara's head was sent to Aurangzeb, who after identification ordered that his corpse be paraded again through the streets of Delhi, to leave no doubt in the popular mind about

his death. Such was the vengeance Aurangzeb exacted for his wrongs, fancied or real. Dara was buried in the tomb of Humayun, where he still rests amidst a number of princes of imperial descent. His second exposure through the streets of Delhi in the midst of much humiliation and contempt points to his popularity, which even Aurangzeb feared in spite of his great abilities and devotion to Sunni orthodoxy.

Sulaiman Shukoh.

Dara had sent Sulaiman Shukoh to the east to deal with Shuja. On hearing of the battle of Dharmat peace was made, and the Prince began his march towards Delhi. At Kara he received the news of Dara's disastrous defeat at Samugarh and a letter from Shahjahan, asking him to bring all his forces back to help his father. The Prince persuaded the generals to accompany him, but Raja Jai Singh frankly refused to remain on the losing side. At the advice of the Saiyyids of Bārah, he marched to Allahabad, and from there proceeded to Hardwar *via* Lucknow and Moradabad, so as to be able to join his father in the Punjab. But Shayasta Khan pursued him and drove him into the Garhwal territory. When Aurangzeb rid himself of all his rivals, he turned towards Sulaiman Shukoh, and asked the Hindu chief with whom he had sought shelter to surrender him. The Raja refused to do so but his son yielded to Aurangzeb's threats. Sulaiman tried to escape to Ladakh, but he was captured after a brief resistance and brought to the fort of Salimgarh (January 2, 1661) by Ram Singh, the son of Raja Jai Singh.

Sulaiman Shukoh was brought in chains before Aurangzeb in the open *Darbar*. The sight of the handsome young Prince in such a miserable condition moved all with pity except his uncle, who would suffer no rival to exist.[91] The

[91] Bernier has pathetically described (pp. 105-6) the scene. He describes also the process of slow poisoning by *post* which was common

Prince bowed to the emperor and prayed that he would prefer immediate death to slow poisoning by *post*. Aurangzeb solemnly promised that *post* would not be administered to him, and that he should feel no anxiety on that account. The Prince bowed again and was sent to the fort of Gwalior the next day. There in that gloomy dungeon the 'wretched beverage' was administered to him every morning until he died.[92] No qualms of conscience seem to have troubled Aurangzeb who broke the promise he had made of his own free will in a most solemn manner.

Shuja.

After the battle of Bahadurpur, Shuja fled to Patna and thence to Mungher. But Sulaiman Shukoh pressed hard, and finally a peace was made (May 1658) by which Bengal, Orissa and Bihar to the east of Mungher were to be given to Shuja in full sovereignty. Aurangzeb, after his coronation at Delhi, wrote a letter to Shuja in which he expressed warm brotherly feelings, and promised to give him anything he wanted after getting rid of Dara Shukoh. Shuja knew Aurangzeb too well to misunderstand his real intentions and prepared for war. A great battle was fought at Khajwah[93] (January 1659), in which Shuja's army was completely defeated.

Pressed hard by Aurangzeb's troops Shuja fled to Bengal and thence to Arakan, where he was killed by the Maghs for planning a conspiracy to overthrow the ruler of that country.[94]

in Mughal India. 'This drink,' says he, 'emaciates the wretched victims; who lose their strength and intellect by slow degrees, become torpid and senseless, and at length die.' Travels, p. 107.

92 In May, 1662, 'he was sent to the next world through the exertions of his keepers.'

93 Khajwah is in the Fatehpur district in the United Provinces, five miles S.-W. of the Bindki Road Station on the E. I. Ry.

94 Khwafi Khan says 'all traces of Shuja disappeared in Arakan.' The information that he was killed by the Maghs is supplied by Sir J. N. Sarkar on the authority of a Dutch merchant named Jan Tak, History of Aurangzeb, I, pp. 611-12.

Why did Aurangzeb outdistance all his rivals in the war of succession? The Muslim chroniclers lay much emphasis on his *iqbal*, but the modern historian must find other explanations of his success. Nothing contributed more to Aurangzeb's rapid rise than Shahjahan's weakness and incapacity. His illness caused the rumour to spread that he was dead, and this evil report was confirmed by Dara's own impolitic conduct. He stopped the communications from the various provinces, and employed his men to intercept the letters of the other Princes to their agents and nobles at Court. We cannot blame Shahjahan for appointing Dara as his successor when physicians had despaired of his life, for even among the Mughals the law of primogeniture had its conscious or unconscious influence in determining the succession to the throne. A partition of the empire at that stage was out of the question, and the only thing Shahjahan could do was to ensure the succession of Dara in the event of his death. But when he had completely recoverd after ten weeks, he ought to have asserted his own will and strongly put down the attempts of the Princes to snatch power from his hands.[95] The author of the *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* writes that the emperor dissuaded Dara from fighting and told him that no harm could be done by their coming to the capital, but more than this he did not do.[96] Perhaps Dara kept the emperor

Causes of Aurangzeb's success.

95 Prof. J. N. Sarkar writes (History of Aurangzeb, Vol. I, p. 283):— 'By the middle of November Shahjahan was completely recovered and important matters which had hitherto been kept from him, could no longer be withheld.'

96 When Aurangzeb, reached the Chambal, writes the author of the *Khulasat*, the emperor sent word to Dara, who was at Dholpur, not to fight with Aurangzeb, and though he was weak, he wished to go to the scene of action to stop the war. The imperial *peshkhanah* proceeded in advance, but Dara did not heed the emperor's advice and prepared for war.

uninformed of the dismay caused by the rumour of his death. Even after the battle of Dharmat which must have opened his eyes to the seriousness of the situation, he did not stir out to meet Aurangzeb who was on the bank of the Chambal, not very far from Agra. If he was too weak from the effects of his illness, he could have called a council of war to deal with the situation and rally to his side those ministers, generals, and officers whose loyalty was yet unshaken. But unfortunately he misjudged the trend of events, and continued to give support to Dara, which exasperated the other Princes and shook their faith in their father's justice. He was still popular and it would have been difficult for the Princes to deprive him of his throne, if he had really willed to keep it for himself and declared his resolve to curb their ambitious spirit.

Dara was not a general himself. Fondled and favoured by his father, and surrounded by all the influences that foster love of flattery and self-conceit, he had not cultivated those qualities which bring to men the prizes of a competitive warfare. His helplessness after Samugarh is a fair measure of his incapacity as general and statesman. His ally Raja Jaswant Singh at first treated with scorn Aurangzeb's overtures for peace, and persisted in his resolve to fight. Too late did he realise the unwisdom of his act, and found that the Prince was put on his mettle by his imprudent refusal. Dara's forces too were not well organised. There was division and strife in his ranks. The Rajputs were not wanting in valour, but their peculiar notions of precedence and prestige fatally marred their heroic attempts to serve the cause of their patron. The Muslims on Dara's side were treacherous and corrupt and were seduced by Aurangzeb's offer of money and honour. Among his rivals there was none who could equal Aurangzeb in diplomacy, statecraft, and generalship. His victory in the war of succession was the victory of action

over supineness, of intrepidity over inertia, and of organisation and discipline over confusion and incoherence.

Aurangzeb's forces were well equipped, and he was constantly drawing men from the ranks of his opponents. His personal gallantry stood him in good stead, and his capacity for strategic combinations and dexterity in arranging the positions of his forces on the field of battle greatly added to his strength. His reckless courage called forth the heroic qualities of his followers, who showed much determination and endurance in his service. Then, there was his championship of Sunni orthodoxy. By talking about Dara's alleged apostasy and intimate association with the Hindus, he had struck a responsive chord in orthodox hearts. Shahjahan's own policy had strengthened the forces of reaction, and, no wonder, if the officers and nobles of the empire, who weighed the *pros* and *cons* of Dara's assumption of imperial dignity felt afraid as to the future of Muslim interests. In fact, Shahjahan fell by the force of passions he had himself aroused by discarding the policy of Akbar and Jahangir. His continued support to Dara, even when his cause was hopeless, increased the anxiety of the Sunni section and convinced it of the correctness of its attitude.

Dara's popularity with Shahjahan's subjects proved of no avail. It was an age in which the leaders counted for everything, the people for nothing. The latter shed tears for Dara ; there was a small riot too to express the popular hatred for Malik Jiwan, but beyond this nothing was done to save the unhappy Prince. The loyalty of chiefs and officers rested on no principle. They readily transferred their allegiance to the successful man of action. By attaching these to his side, Aurangzeb could successfully defy public opinion and disregard the claims of natural kinship.

Shahjahan was closely guarded in the fort of Agra, where he lived as a prisoner with his daughter Jahanara for eight

long years. He made attempts to regain his liberty but in vain. His enemies became more vigilant in keeping watch, and added to his bitterness and grief by denying to him even the most trivial conveniences. No one could see the emperor without the agents of Aurangzeb being present, and no letters were allowed to pass unopened. Later, the captive was forbidden to write letters with his own hand, and had to dictate to a eunuch. When he needed a pair of slippers, he was supplied "shoes neither of eight rupees nor of four nor of two, but the common leather shoes."[97] Aurangzeb opened a bitter correspondence with him about the jewellery in the fort of Agra, which was carefully locked and sealed by his men, although the aged emperor was allowed to have a look at his precious hoard.[98] But to the treasure inside the private rooms of the *haram*, the emperor had full access. Tavernier writes that when Aurangzeb asked Shahjahan at the time of his coronation to send some of his jewels to be used on that auspicious day, he regarded it as an insult, and became so enraged that for some days he behaved like a mad man, and was nearly dead. He frequently called for a pestle and mortar to pound all his precious stones, but Jahanara dissuaded him from doing so.[99] Aurangzeb blamed him for partiality towards Dara and neglect of government, and declared that the responsibility for the fratricidal war entirely rested on him.

Last days of Shahjahan.

97 Storia do Mogor, II, p. 77.

98 Sarkar, III, p. 130. Aurangzeb had sealed up all jewels and treasure after the surrender of the Agra Fort (8th June, 1658). All property was attached by his orders. Prince Muhammad was asked to manage things in such a way that Shahjahan might not be pained in mind by the occurrence.

99 Travels, I, p. 371.

He urged that he was compelled to join in it in defence of himself and the interests of Islam, and that it behoved a king like Shahjahan to submit with resignation to the Divine will. The fallen emperor was deeply touched by these reproaches. He described his son as a robber who had usurped the throne to which he had no moral or legal right, and charged him with being a hypocrite. But reproaches like entreaties failed to produce any effect, and the most magnificent ruler of the Mughal line " ceased to complain like a child that cries itself to sleep."

The war of succession had resulted in the deaths of his dearest children, but Shahjahan bore up against these blows of fate with a patience and fortitude which deserve to be admired. In these days of distress, he never forgot God and spent his time in meditation and prayer. The constant companionship of two saintly souls, Saiyyid Muhammad of Qanauj and his own daughter Jahanara, assuaged his grief, and kept him alive. Like Cordelia, Jahanara showed true filial piety and devotion towards her forlorn father. She nursed him with the tender care of a mother, and did her best to make him forget the cruel bereavements that fate had inflicted on him. In January 1666, he again fell ill, and it became certain that his end was near. He retained his consciousness to the last, and with low breath directed Jahanara as to how his last rites were to be performed. Then having made his will and charged Jahanara to treat his wives and servants with kindness, he expired an January 22, 1666, at the age of 74, with eyes fixed on the Taj Mahal, where he expressed a desire to be buried. Jahanara's wish to take the corpse in a stately procession to the mausoleum was frustrated by Aurangzeb. The latter did not even come to see the dying man, and the once majestic 'king of the kings' was carried to his last resting place by eunuchs and low class menials through a private door, broken open in the wall of the fort below the Musamman Burj ' in a manner

unlike the funeral of other emperors and unworthy of his ancestry.'

The funeral was simple enough. Manucci says that Jahanara sent 2,000 gold coins to be scattered among the poor, but the guards seized the money, saying that prisoners could not give anything.[100] Insolence could not have gone further. To leave his father even in death to the mercies of eunuchs and slaves was a proceeding of which there can be no justification. Whatever the feelings of Aurangzeb, Shahjahan's death plunged Agra into grief, and in all parts of the town the great qualities and noble deeds of the deceased were on everybody's lips. A kind and just ruler who never oppressed his subjects, he was bemoaned universally by them, and according to the Muslim chronicler, ' the cry of lamentation rose up from every house in the lanes and market places alike.' Jahanara's feelings on this occasion can better be imagined than described.

A month later Aurangzeb entered the fort, and if Manucci is to be believed, the Begum presented to him the letter of pardon which she had obtained for her brother from Shahjahan together with the valuable jewels in his possession.[101] Aurangzeb did not pause to examine the genuineness of the document, and deemed it ' enough to justify him with the populace.' The Begum Sahib was requested to go to Delhi, and was allowed to retain the honours and dignities which she had enjoyed during her father's lifetime. At Delhi the noble Princess continued to enjoy the position of the First Lady in the Court till her death on 6th September, 1681. She acquired a great celebrity for her charity and piety, and like a faithful disciple of Mian Mir spent her time in meditation and prayer. On her death she was buried in the tomb of Nizamuddin Aulia, her revered saint, and the

[100] Storia do Mogor, II, p. 126.

[101] Storia do Mogor II, p. 126.

modest stone inscription beside her grave still shows how pious and gentle of spirit she was.[102]

Character and personality of Shahjahan.

Shahjahan at the time of his imprisonment was in his 66th year. Few men in history have had their patience put to such a test as this most magnificent ruler of the Mughal dynasty. His misfortunes like his enjoyments were of an extraordinary character. From the meridian of splendour, he had all of a sudden sunk to the position of a miserable captive. His portrait handed down to us by Amin Qazwini shows him to have been a handsome man of winsome manners, excelling all his contemporaries in culture and refinement, and intensely devoted to his religious and secular duties. He was of moderately tall stature, and his complexion was somewhat white. He had a broad forehead and good black eyes, and his ears and nose were neither too long nor too short. He had one mole on the right eye and four on the four fingers of his hand and one on the sole of his left foot. He had a large wart below his eye near the nose which was considered auspicious.

102 Here is the inscription of Jahanara's tomb.

هوا الحی اقیوم

بغیر سبزه نپوشد کسے مزار مرا – که قبر پر ثوش غریبان همین گیاه بس است

الفقیرا الفانیه جهان آرا مرید خوا جگان چشت بنت شاه جهان پادشاه غازی انار الله

برهانه سنه ۱۰۹۲.

Translation.—"He is living and self-subsisting. Let naught cover my grave save the green grass: for grass well suffices as a covering for the graves of the lowly. The humble and mortal Jahanara, the disciple of the Khwajas of Chisht, and the daughter of Shahjahan, the king and champion of faith. May God illuminate his demonstrations. The year 1092 (1681 A.D.)."

Jahanara was born on the 21st of Safar, 1023 A.H. (2nd April, 1614 A.D.). She was first given the title of Begum Sahib and then of Padshah Begum, and for a long time was the chief lady in the imperial *haram*. When Shahjahan was imprisoned by Aurangzeb, she voluntarily shared his imprisonment with him. She died on the 3rd of Ramzan, 1092 A.H. (16th September, 1681 A.D.).

The drama of Shahjahan's life which began amidst scenes of unparalleled brilliance and enjoyment ended like one of the tragedies of Euripides. He had to taste in equal measure the sweetness as well as the bitterness of the cup of fashionable life and to bear with patience the vicissitudes which an unkind fate had reserved in store for him. In his boyhood he was a favourite of his grandfather, Akbar, who frequently told Salim that he was the best of his sons. The child fully returned the old man's love, and did not leave his bed even when he was about to die. When four years, four months, and four days of age he began his education, and was entrusted to the care of such well-known teachers as Mulla Qasim Beg Tabrezi, Hakim Dawāi, Shaikh Abdul Khair, and Shaikh Sufi, and by reason of his great intelligence acquired much useful knowledge in a short time. He was an absolute teetotaller till the age of 24, and Jahangir tells us in his *Memoirs* that he was with difficulty persuaded to taste alcohol for the first time. He practised all the manly exercises in which the princely youth of that day took delight. He passionately loved hunting, sword-fencing, elephant fights, horse-riding, and retained his fondness for game, even when he was engrossed in the busy duties of the kingly office. Like other scions of the royal house, he had cultivated the qualities of a soldier and distinguished himself in Mewar and the Deccan, though in his later years after his accession to the throne his successes were neither rapid nor brilliant. His direction of the campaigns in Balkh, Qandhar, and the Deccan deserves to be censured from the military point of view. To the accomplishment of a soldier he added the graces of a literary man. He could speak Persian with fluency and ease, and conversed in Hindi with those who were not acquainted with that language. Having been brought up in his childhood by Ruqayya Begum, he could speak in Turkish, and understand many Turkish words without difficulty. He was a fine calligraphist, took delight in poetry and song, and evinced an

extraordinary interest in art. He was a great patron of music, and himself knew how to play with skill and proficiency upon musical instruments. His inventive genius exhibited itself in the finished products of his workshops. He was by nature a lover of art, beauty and wealth. He loved cleanliness and made a lavish use of perfumes. So punctilious was he in these matters, that he used to wash his hands even after touching pearls and jewels. Of his exquisite architectural tastes, an account will be given in a different place. Here it will suffice to say that no emperor of Hindustan before him had spent so lavishly in adorning the great cities of his empire with palaces, mosques, mausoleums, canals, gardens, baths and reservoirs. Some of these buildings remain to this day to remind our humdrum world of the wealth, splendour and glory of their builder. The modern critic may condemn his lavish expenditure as a criminal waste of public money, but in Shahjahan's day such phrases carried no meaning, and any one who employed them in relation to kings and governments would have lost his head without even the semblance of a trial.

Shahjahan was a man of strong family affections. An indulgent father and a doting husband, he had a tender heart which was easily moved to pity at the sight of poverty and distress. Though the practice of the age did not condemn a plurality of wives, he lavished his affection in an unequalled degree on Arjumand Banu, and raised a memorial of her which the world would not let willingly die. After the Begum's death, he transferred his affection to his eldest daughter—a pious and cultured lady—who most appropriately filled her mother's place in the imperial *haram*. With what tender care he had nursed her during her illness and besieged the ears of heaven with prayers day and night for her speedy recovery? Bernier and Tavernier have positively stated that the emperor carried on incest with his daughter, but all evidence goes to

prove that this unnatural scandal was a mere bazar gossip. Among his sons he loved Dara best, and though an orthodox Sunni, he tolerated his Sufi proclivities to the utter disgust of his other sons. The charge of cruelty brought against him on the ground of the murder of his brothers cannot be refuted, but it may be urged in extenuation that his atrocities were due in a great measure to necessity and the custom of the dynasty to which he belonged. The hidden powers that control the destinies of man fully punished him for his misdeeds, and though we are shocked at the inhumanity which he showed, we lose, as Dow says, half our rage in the pressure of circumstances which drove him to such a ghastly step. Shahjahan was not naturally cruel, and for these early crimes he made ample amends by the strict justice and clemency of his government and his solicitude for the well-being of his subjects.

Unlike Jahangir Shahjahan was an orthodox Musalman. The details of his daily life supplied by Amin Qazwini furnish proof of his devotion to the faith. He used to offer prayers regularly four times a day and observe fast during the whole of Ramzan. Though friendly towards the Hindus in his personal relations, he was hostile to their religion, but he never allowed his bigoted Sunni instincts to override considerations of statesmanship. Early in his reign he had ordered the demolition of 76 new temples in the district of Benares alone, and it was by his command that the wonderful temple of Orcha was razed to the ground by the Mughal soldiery, and the women of Bir Singh Bundela were treated in a manner which shocks our sense of decorum. He hated the Christians and waged war against them, but in this he was not much to blame. In the account of the English factors we are told that he was a great enemy of Christianity, and that the Christians never felt secure against the outbursts of his wrath.[103] To

[103] The English Factories, 1634—36, p. 241.

the Shias he was equally hostile. His wars against them were undertaken not merely for conquest, but for the extirpation of heresy and the triumph of the true doctrine. The social legislation which he undertook reveals his attitude towards religious dissent. When the emperor was informed that in the district of Burhanpur mixed marriages prevailed among the Hindus and Muslims, and that women after death were buried or burnt according to the religion of their husbands, he issued an order that no Muslim girl should remain in the house of a Hindu and if the husband desired to keep her, he should embrace Islam. The Zamindar of the place accepted Islam and received the title of *Raja Daulat-i-mand*. All such practices were abolished, and Qazis and Maulvis were appointed from the Khalsa lands to teach the ignorant the tenets of the faith. The Hindus of the Punjab were severely punished for marrying Muslim women who were snatched away from them and made over to Muslims. About 400 Hindu husbands who could not bear the disruption of their homes embraced Islam, and one who had insulted the Holy Book was put to death. About seven mosques were redeemed, and three temples were turned into mosques.[104]

Gifts were sent to Mecca and Medina. In the 24th year of the reign the Subahdar of Gujarat was ordered to purchase goods worth one and a half lakhs, out of which 50 thousand worth were to be sent to the Sheriff of Mecca and 50 thousand worth to the Saiyyids and 'Ulama of Medina and the rest was to be distributed among the poor and the indigent. When the emperor was incapacitated by old age to observe fasts, he paid sixty thousand rupees as the *fidiah* to be distributed among the poor.[105]

104 A detailed account of them is given in Qazwini's *Padshahnama* and also in the *Mulakkhas*.

Padshahnama, A.U. MS., p. 85, Mulakkhas, A.U. MS., pp. 197-98.

105 Mulakkhas, A.U. MS., p. 534.

As Shahjahan advanced in years, he lost his old vigour and enterprise. Manucci dwells at length upon his licentiousness and senile revels, and repeats the gossips which he found current at Delhi and Agra.[106] There is no doubt the emperor drank wine, indulged his appetites, and like other men whom the full lustre of woman's love has dazzled in youth, still found pleasure in amorous adventures. He neglected the business of government for which he was blamed afterwards by Aurangzeb. He became so indolent and ease-loving that he could not control even his sons, and helplessly allowed power to be snatched from his failing hands. With the loss of capacity for hard work, his old vigilance too was gone. Corruption and treachery became rife at court, and his own ministers and nobles ceased to dread his power. But the trials and sufferings of his last days called forth the strongest traits of his character. He resigned himself to the will of God in a manner rare among crowned heads. Misfortune failed to bend his proud spirit, and he scorned to treat with Aurangzeb on terms of equality. He once sharply rebuked him for advising him like a father, and proved his superiority over him in epistolary controversy.

Little did Aurangzeb realise that his old age would be more lonely and miserable than that of his father, whom he had confided to the tender mercies of eunuchs and slaves, and that his last moments would know nothing of that serene consolation and joyous confidence with which the aged monarch passed into the world of everlasting peace, gazing with his fast closing eyes upon the marble monument beyond the Agra fort. The wrongs done to him by Aurangzeb were fully avenged in the rebellious conduct of the latter's sons and the collapse of the great empire before his very eyes.

106 Storia, II, p. 192.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TURN IN THE TIDE

Having freed himself from all his rivals, Aurangzeb ascended the throne on July 21, 1658, though his formal accession did not take place until the 5th of June, 1659. The coronation was celebrated with great eclat, and Shahjahan's vast wealth in gold, silver, pearls, jewels and diamonds added to the splendour of the occasion. After the fashion of oriental monarchs, Aurangzeb seated himself on the throne of his ancestors at the hour fixed by the astrologers of the state and assumed the title of Alamgir. Fêtes and festivals followed in rapid succession, and no expenditure was grudged to make the occasion a source of happiness to all sections of the populace in the empire.

Accession of Aurangzeb.

The civil war among the brothers had thrown the administration out of gear, and caused widespread misery among the population. The numerous tolls and taxes which the people had to pay added to their woes, and seriously interfered with the progress of trade. The movement of large armies in the different parts of the country damaged the crops, and in certain provinces owing to drought prices rose and food became dear. To alleviate the sufferings of his subjects, Aurangzeb abolished the *rāhdāri* (toll) which was collected on every highway frontier or ferry, and brought a large revenue to the state. He abolished also the *pāndāri*, which was a kind of ground or house tax, levied throughout the empire from all traders, from the vegetable hawker and

Early measures.

the potter to the richest jeweller and banker.[1] Many other cesses, lawful and unlawful, levied from Hindus as well as Muslims, numbering 80, were abolished. Among those specially worthy of mention are the cesses collected at the fairs held in honour of Muslim saints and at the *Jātrās* of Hindus near their temples and the taxes on alcohol, gaming houses, and brothels. To lower the price of food the duty on corn was also remitted. Out of the 80 cesses abolished by the emperor, Khwafi Khan mentions only 14 by name, and writes that in spite of the strict orders of the emperor to enforce his edicts, most of these taxes continued to be levied by the Zamindars in the distant provinces.

One of the factors in Aurangzeb's success in the civil war was his avowed solicitude for Sunni interests. Now that he was securely seated on the throne, he tried to please his supporters by issuing certain ordinances intended to bring the lives of the people into conformity with orthodox Islam. He forbade the use of the *Kalima* on the coins to prevent their defilement by the touch of non-Muslim hands. He abolished the Nauroz which Akbar had borrowed from the rulers of Persia.

The Islamic state is a theocracy concerned also with the manners and morals of the community. Aurangzeb appointed censors of public morals (*muhatasibs*) to look after the conduct of the people and to enforce obedience to the Holy Law. Their duty was to put a stop to the use of alcohol, intoxicating drugs, and such other things as are forbidden in the Quran. The mosques and *Khanqahs* which were in a dilapidated condition were ordered to be repaired, and Imams and Muazzins were regularly paid. Harsh measures were taken against the Sufi associates of Dara, and the chief of these, Sarmad, was cruelly executed after the mockery of a trial.

[1] Elliot, VII, p. 247.

Mir Jumla, Aurangzeb's commander, who had been his most valuable helper in the war of succession, was appointed governor of Bengal. It was wise to keep such a powerful and ambitious nobleman at a distance from the capital. The Raja of Kuch Bihar and Assam had seized some Mughal territory, and Mir Jumla was ordered to chastise him. He started in November 1661, at the head of a large force and a flotilla of boats. In spite of the difficulties which man and nature placed in his way, the viceroy pushed on, and conquered both Kuch Bihar and Assam. Then he proceeded to invest the capital of Assam, but his troops suffered heavily from the outbreak of an epidemic, which destroyed men and beasts in large numbers. The prices rose high owing to famine, and the army endured great privations. But the viceroy was not deterred in his plans by this unforeseen calamity, and commenced operations after the rainy season. He was himself attacked by fever but still he pressed on. At last the Assamese, when they despaired of resistance, sued for peace and a treaty was made with them. The unhealthy air of the country and over-exertion in this campaign aggravated Mir Jumla's illness, and he died while returning towards Dacca by boat on March 31, 1663.

Mir Jumla in Assam.

Mir Jumla was succeeded by Aurangzeb's maternal uncle Shayasta Khan in the governorship of the province. In 1666 the new governor captured Chatgaon, drove away the Portuguese pirates from the delta of the Brahmaputra, and inflicted sharp defeats on the Raja of Arakan.

The Marathas were the most determined enemies of Aurangzeb. His war against them lasted for nearly a quarter of a century and resulted in nothing but defeat, humiliation and disaster. The real leader of the Marathas, who infused a fresh life and vigour into them and united the scattered elements of

Rise of the Marathas.

their race, was Shivaji, a born military commander and an administrator of undoubted genius. But Shivaji's rise to power cannot be treated as an isolated phenomenon in Maratha history. It was as much the result of personal daring and heroism as of the peculiar geographical situation of the Deccan country and the unifying religious influences that were animating the people with new hopes and aspirations in the 15th and 16th centuries. Before describing Shivaji's career, it will be worth while to say something about the physical features of the country and the forces which prepared the way for his emergence.

Physical features of the country.

The Maratha country is very different from the north. It lies in the midst of natural barriers which have developed certain peculiar physical and moral qualities, which distinguish the Marathas from the rest of their countrymen. The Vindhya and Satpura ranges and the Narbada river form a triple line of barricades, which divides the Deccan from the high tableland of Central India and the vast low-lying plains of the north. The Western Ghats or the Sahyadri ranges which run like a wall along the entire western coast and the Vindhyas running from east to west have not only added to the security of the country, but have also produced a climate which has greatly influenced the character and habits of the people. The hill forts in these mountains have played an important part in Maratha history, and it is with their help that the Marathas have successfully defied the invaders from the north. The rugged and uneven nature of the country has given the inhabitants a special advantage over men accustomed to fight in the open field. Their guerilla tactics baffled the strategy of their opponents, and even the Mughals with their enormous resources in men and money found it impossible to conquer them. The bracing climate of the country added to their physical vigour, and rendered them capable of much initiative

and enterprise. The scanty rainfall and poverty of the soil compelled a simplicity of life, which doubled their chances of success against men enfeebled by luxury, indolence and ease. They never shrank from the hardest and roughest toil, and no thought of pleasure or comfort could shake their inflexible resolve. Riding on their small ponies and subsisting on raw or parched millet, they traversed long distances and struck terror into the hearts of their enemies. The Mughals discovered to their cost after much suffering that to fight with men like these was to fight with air and to prolong a bootless campaign, entailing much misery and loss.

There was a great religious stir in Mahārāshṭra in the 15th and 16th centuries. An account has been given before of the teachings of Rāmānand, Kabir and Nānak, who saw good in all religions, condemned superstition and ritual, and did much for the fusion of the various castes and creeds. The Deccan witnessed the rise of a similar protestant movement, and the new prophets and saints of Mahārāshṭra, sprung from the lower orders, condemned forms and ceremonies and the distinctions of caste based on mere birth.[2] The most famous of them are Tukaram, Ram Das, Vaman Pandit and Eknāth—all of whom launched a crusade against the existing abuses of religion, and preached the gospel of *Bhakti* or personal devotion to God. They laid stress upon the equality of all men before God and held that by means of *Bhakti* a Śūdra or a Chaṇḍāl could qualify himself for God's favour quite as much as a Brāhman. Their doctrine made no distinction between the high and the low, and the only bond which united their followers was

Religious stir in Mahārāshṭra.

[2] The centre of these new ideas was Pandharpur, a seat of pilgrimage in the Deccan. The Pandharpur movement was a powerful factor in unifying the Mahārāshṭra country.

Bhakti. Among these seers Rām Dās Samarth, whom Shivaji treated as his Guru, exercised the most powerful influence on the thought of the time. He established his *maṭhs* (or monasteries) and allied himself with those who were interested in political and social affairs. The Swāmī was not merely a religious preacher ; he was also a nation-builder. His enthusiasm for national regeneration is revealed in his writings and the comprehensive scheme of reform which he conceived touched all aspects of the country's life. In his famous work, the *Dasbodh,* he preached the philosophy of action and progress, and exhorted his followers to work for the diffusion of the new spirit far and wide. With all the fire and passion of his soul Samarth Rām Dās urged his enthusiastic disciples to follow the new path and to utilise their energies in developing the power of the nation. The seed did not fall on barren soil, and at last he found in Shivaji a man of genius who gave to his visions a practical shape, and applied his ideas in political and social organisation.

Ranade writes of this new movement :—

> "Like the Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 16th century, that was a religious, social and literary revival and Reformation in India, but notably in the Deccan in the 15th and 16th centuries. This religious revival was not Brahmanical in its orthodoxy ; it was heterodox in its spirit of protest against forms and ceremonies and class distinctions based on birth, and ethical in its preference of a pure heart, and the law of love, to all other acquired merits and good works. This religious revival was the work also of the people, of the masses, and not of the classes. At its head were saints and prophets, poets and philosophers, who sprang chiefly from the lower orders of society,—tailors, carpenters, potters, gardeners, shop-

keepers, barbers, and even *mahars* (scavengers), more often than Brahmans."[3]

To the influence of religion was added that of literature and language. The lyrical hymns of Tukārām breathing of sincere and fervent devotion to God were sung by all classes, and served as a bond of unity among the various sections of the community. Without this homogeneity, caused by the diffusion of a common culture, it would have been impossible for Shivaji to build up the national state.

Training of the Marathas.

Shivaji was greatly helped in his political and social synthesis by men who had received ample training in the arts of administration and war in the service of the Muhammadan Sultanates of the Deccan. In the kingdom of Golkunda and Bijapur, the Marathas were largely employed in the revenue department and held important posts in the army. Some of them held even ministerial portfolios and commanded much influence in the states in which they served. The Deccani Brahmans were often entrusted with diplomatic missions, and took part in the most confidential business of government. The Maratha *Siledars* and *Bargirs* were employed in the military department by the Bahmanids and their political successors—the rulers of the five states into which that kingdom was split up—and thus acquired wealth and power which made them a factor to be reckoned with in Deccan politics. The knowledge and insight which they gained while in office stood them in good stead, when they had to oppose the Muhammadan kings who employed them. During the reign of Shahjahan, when the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda were threatened with extinction, these Jagirdars obtained an opportunity of advancing their own interests. They took part in political revolutions,

[3] Rise of the Maratha Power, p. 10.

and changed sides as convenience required, and tried to secure advantageous terms for themselves from all parties. One of these Jagirdars was Shivaji's father, Shāhji Bhonsla, who had entered the service of the Bijapur State in 1632, and had risen to power through the favour of Murāri Jagdeva who enjoyed the confidence of the Wazir Khawas Khan.

Shivaji's early life.

Shivaji was born in the hill fort of Shivner on April 10, 1627. His mother Jījabāi was a woman of uncommon talents and brought up her child with great care and affection. Shāhji's neglect of his wife, followed by a fresh marriage alliance with a young and beautiful woman, made Jījabāi concentrate all her energies on bringing up her son, for whom she felt a boundless affection. Being a woman of a religious turn of mind, familiar with Purāṇic legends, she filled her son's mind with the stories of the renowned heroes and warriors of bygone ages. The lad's spirit was stirred as he listened to these tales of human achievement and grandeur and he felt a desire to imitate the example of the heroes of old. Luckily, his father found a teacher of great ability in Dādoji Kondadeva, whose constant vigilance and care exerted a highly beneficial influence on Shivaji's character. All evidence tends to confirm the view that Shivaji never received like Akbar formal instruction in letters, but he assimilated with great zeal the contents of the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, and the wisdom and knowledge enshrined in the numerous discourses on Dharma, and the arts of government and war. He learnt horse-riding, the use of arms, and other manly exercises, which were in Muhammadan India the staple education of the scions of the aristocracy, both Hindu and Muslim. Shivaji's stay at the Bijapur court made him acquainted with the strength and weakness of that 'great but degenerate capital.' He fully realised the forces of decadence that were working in that Sultanate, and this first-hand knowledge greatly helped him in his future plans.

Gifted with a keen faculty of observation, he took a great interest in examining horses and munitions of war, and asked questions about political affairs. His contact with Hindu sages convinced him of the necessity of doing something for the protection and regeneration of Hinduism. Swāmī Rām Dās, his spiritual preceptor and guide, instilled into his mind a love of Hindu religion and charged him with the duty of protecting the cow and the Brāhman—the only cry that could appeal powerfully to his contemporaries. Some modern writers have tried to prove that it was Rām Dās who gave his disciple the ideal of an independent Hindu monarchy, but the evidence in support of this view is neither sufficient nor convincing.[4] It may be conceded at once that the abasement of the Hindu

[4] Sarkar, Shivaji and His Times, pp. 381-82.

Mr. G. S. Sardesai maintains that Shivaji's aim was ultimately to establish a Hindu empire of suzerain power for all India, gradually expanding from its original base in the Deccan. He gives the following reasons for his opinion :—

(1) The atmosphere in which Shivaji was born and bred favoured the development of such an aim. All North India was ground to dust under the Muhammadan yoke and some one was needed to champion the cause of Hinduism.

(2) His wars and campaigns, his plans and movements, and his words and arrangements do not show that he restricted his vision to the Maharastra or Deccan only.

(3) His introduction of the *Sardeshmukhi* and the *Chauth* furnishes a clue to his future aims. He claimed *Sardeshmukhi* from Shahjahan as early as 1648; the latter he revived in 1660 when he conquered the Konkan. He employed these to enable his nation to establish, in the long run, a Hindu empire.

(4) He befriended Hindu princes. Even when he was fighting the Mughals he never fought against the Rajput generals.

(5) Shivaji purposely undertook his visit to Agra in order to acquaint himself with the condition of the country. He returned home after a year gaining valuable experience of which he made use afterwards. This shows that Shivaji's plan included an all-India movement.

religion at the hands of the Muslims led Shivaji to prepare himself for its defence, but it is too much to assert that his desire for political dominion owed its origin to the inspiration of Swāmī Rām Dās. Anyway, the defence of the Hindu religion and the foundation of political power were inseparable things ; the one could not be done without the other. The environment fully reacted upon his vigorous mind and deeply roused his hatreds and resentments. Altogether, the influences of heredity, education, temperament and environment drove him to oppose the Mughals and to make a desperate attempt to rid the land of their domination.

Shivaji's military career begins.

Before beginning his military career, Shivaji fully acquainted himself with the country, and secured the devotion and attachment of the Mavalees—the people inhabiting the Maval country running along the Western Ghats for about 90 miles in length and 12 miles in breadth. They left the plough, joined his service and helped him in his predatory excursions and conquests. From his boyhood, Shivaji longed to carve out for himself an independent kingdom, but his tutor and guardian, Dādoji Kondadeva, advised him to be more modest in his ambition. A man of limited ideas, Dādoji could not sympathise with Shivaji's dreams of conquest; and suggested to him that he should rest satisfied with serving the Sultan of Bijapur like his ancestors. But Shivaji was destined for greater

These arguments are not convincing. Sir J. N. Sarkar's view comes very near the truth :—

"For one thing, he never had peace to work out his political ideas. The whole of his short life was one struggle with enemies, a period of preparation and not of function. All his attention was necessarily devoted to meeting daily dangers with daily expedient, and he had not the chance of peacefully building up a well-planned political edifice."

Shivaji and His Times, p. 502 (1929 edition).

things. To him it was nothing short of dishonour to enter the service of a decrepit state which was a prey to intrigue and foreign war.

The serious illness of the Sultan of Bijapur in 1646 and the consequent disorder in his kingdom gave Shivaji the long-desired opportunity. He captured the fort of Torna, 20 miles S.-W. of Poona, in the same year and then raided the fort of Raigarh, five miles east of Torna, which easily fell into his hands. After Dādoji's death in 1647 Shivaji became the virtual master of his father's western Jagir, and brought the fort of Chakan and the outposts of Baramati and Indāpur under his control. Soon after he seized the forts of Singarh, Kondana, and Purandhar, which secured his Jagir on the southern frontier.

The Sultan of Bijapur had come to know of Shivaji's daring acts, but his ministers persuaded him that the matter was not serious. Shivaji continued his raids, but when he seized Kalyan and harried the Konkan, the Sultan was roused from his slumber, and felt that some action must be taken. About the same time his father Shāhji was arrested and imprisoned by Mustafa, the Commander-in-Chief of Bijapur, for misbehaving in the siege of Jinji in the South Arcot district, and his Jagir was confiscated. Shivaji was upset by the news of his father's imprisonment, and for the time being gave up his predatory raids. He negotiated with Prince Murad, the Mughal viceroy of the Deccan, and expressed a wish to join the imperial service. The Bijapur Government was alarmed at this diplomatic move of Shivaji, and at once ordered the release of his father. The release was not due to Mughal pressure, for Shahjahan was bound by treaty not to encourage the rebellious officers of the Sultan, but to the good offices of certain Bijapuri nobles who were Muslims. Shāhji promised to curb the unruly spirit of his son and to ask him to keep the peace for six years. Shivaji kept quiet and did little to

give offence to the Sultanate of Bijapur. He spent his time in developing his resources for a more determined struggle with his rivals in the Deccan.

These rivals were the rulers of Bijapur and the Mughals. Without coming into conflict with them, it was impossible to build up an independent state—the supreme object of his desire. When Adil Shah died in November, 1656, Prince Aurangzeb advanced against Bijapur. Shivaji judged it a good opportunity to plan a fresh move on the diplomatic chessboard. Sure of a response from the Mughal Prince, who was naturally interested in encouraging the discontented officers of Bijapur, he opened negotiations with Aurangzeb, but these proved of no avail owing to the lack of mutual confidence. Shivaji raided the Mughal territory, but when the Sultan of Bijapur made peace with the Mughals, he saw no other alternative but to follow suit. Before peace could be signed between him and the Mughals, Aurangzeb left for the north, on hearing of Shahjahan's illness, to take part in the war of succession.

The cessation of hostilities between the Mughals and the Sultan of Bijapur gave the latter sufficient time to deal with Shivaji, whose increasing power was a source of chronic anxiety to him. Shahji was asked to stop his son's hostile activities, but he excused himself on the ground that his son was not amenable to his control. When persuasion failed, the government was constrained to employ force. Afzal Khan was sent at the head of a considerable force 'to bring back the rebel dead or alive.' He was commissioned by the dowager-Queen to effect the purpose by feigning friendship with Shivaji and by promising him a pardon for his wrong-doings.

Afzal Khan was a braggart. He had boastfully declared in open Darbar that he would capture the Maratha bandit without firing a shot. But on reaching the hilly country in

which Shivaji's power was centred he realised the folly of his hasty action. He sent a Brahman officer of his, Kṛishṇaji Bhāskar, with a letter for Shivaji in which he promised the grant of forts and districts seized by him and the conferment of titles and distinctions as a mark of honour. On the receipt of this letter Shivaji found himself on the horns of a dilemma. If he accepted Afzal's seductive offer, there would be an end to all his cherished dreams of independent dominion ; and if he adopted an irreconcilable attitude towards Bijapur, he would have to face the wrath of the Sultan and the emperor of Delhi and to fight for his very existence in the Deccan. His ministers urged a compromise but he was firm. Quietly he organised his forces and resolved to go to war in self-defence.

Though fully prepared for a contest, Shivaji received Afzal's envoy with great courtesy, and by means of honeyed words and offer of gold he succeeded in eliciting from him the real secret. He was informed that Afzal meant treachery, and wished to capture him by throwing him off his guard. A spot was fixed, and a conference was arranged. It was agreed that both parties should meet unattended by their troops. Afzal who was a sturdy, well-built man advanced to embrace the short slim Maratha who only reached up to his shoulders. Gradually he tightened his clasp, and holding his neck in a firm grip with his left arm, he drew his dagger with a view to finish his opponent. But Shivaji was not the man to be taken unawares. With the help of his *Bāghnaḵh* (tiger-claw), he forced the Khan to relax his grip, and thrust it into his breast so that he fell wounded on the ground. The Marathas rushed upon the Musalmans who were carrying the Khan in a *Pālḵī*, and cut off his head which they carried in triumph to their master. Afzal's officers and men were dumbfounded by the news of their leader's tragic end. They engaged the Marathas in a death-grapple, but suffered a miserable defeat. They were

mercilessly butchered, and their baggage and artillery train were captured by the enemy.

Was Afzal's death an act of treachery on the part of Shivaji? The Marathas justified the murder, and looked upon it as an act of national liberation. Their historians have described the deed as merely an act of vengeance upon the sworn enemies of their gods and the defilers of their shrines. Khwafi Khan puts the entire blame upon Shivaji and accuses him of base treachery and deceit.[5] Grant Duff repeats the charge, and his views are echoed by all other European writers who have followed him. But modern research has established the fact that Shivaji perpetrated the murder in self-defence.[6] The English factory record shows that the Khan was asked by his sovereign to capture the Maratha chief by feigning friendship with him, and his envoy also informed Shivaji that treachery was intended. Shivaji followed the good old principle of 'safety first,' and forestalled his opponent in the execution of his sinister designs. Kincaid and Parasanis relate the story of the manner in which the Khan insulted Shivaji on seeing his splendour, and was confronted with an equally unpleasant retort. There is no need to waste much time over the old controversy as to who struck the first blow. Evidence has now become available which proves that it was Afzal who acted as the aggressor. The old Maratha chroniclers who never conceal Shivaji's crimes have recorded the same thing, and their statements cannot be lightly brushed

[5] He writes: "The designing rascal by sending various presents and fruits of the country and by his humbleness and submission, conciliated Afzal Khan, who fell into the snare, believing all his false and deceiving statements, and observing none of that caution which the wise commend." Elliot, VII, p. 259.

[6] For a fuller examination of the subject see Sarkar's 'Shivaji and His Times,' pp. 63—73. 'History of the Maratha People' by Kincaid and Parasanis, Vol. I, pp. 157—64.

aside like the patriotic effusions of modern writers, who refuse to see any fault or blemish in their adored hero. Shivaji's preparations were made in self-defence. If he had not taken the necessary precautions, he would have been slain by the general who had already a design on his life. But in one thing the Bijapuris were taken by surprise. They never expected the fearful attack which the Marathas delivered upon them, and perished without much resistance. Afzal Khan did not take any precautions, because he thought that his murderous intent would be kept a secret to the last. He felt sure that Shivaji's followers would disperse in panic after their leader's death. What a pity! the veteran general had so hopelessly undervalued his opponent's capacity for meeting an emergency fraught with such dire consequences to himself.

The murder of Afzal Khan and the complete rout of Bijapur forces encouraged Shivaji in his designs, and he began to carry his depredations into the Mughal country. Aurangzeb who was by this time securely seated on the throne of Delhi sent his maternal uncle, Shayasta Khan, who was appointed to the viceroyalty of the Deccan, to deal with him. Shayasta occupied Poona, captured the fort of Chakan, and the Mughals after two years of desultory warfare established their hold on the North Konkan, including the district of Kalyan, while the south remained in Shivaji's hand. Shayasta returned to Poona after the capture of Chakan to stay there during the rainy season, but Shivaji had recourse to a curious stratagem to get the better of his opponents. A band of 400 picked Maratha soldiers feigned to be a marriage party, and with a boy dressed up as a bridegroom in their midst, they entered the town, and at midnight raided the governor's residence, a house in which Shivaji had lived in his childhood. These were the days of

The Mughals and Shivaji. Shayasta Khan sent against him.

Ramzan, and the governor and his guards had gone to sleep after a heavy meal. The Marathas began a fearful slaughter, and made a breach into the wall through which Shivaji with 200 men entered the *haram*.[7] A consternation ensued, and the Nawab was roused from his slumber by one of his slave girls. He got up, and hastily seized a bow, arrows and a spear, but before he could strike, Shivaji cut off his thumb. Just at this time the lights were put out by one of the Nawab's servants, and in this darkness he was carried by two of his slave girls who retained their presence of mind. The Marathas entered the guard-house, and slew every one whether awake or asleep, shouting all the time, "This is how you keep watch." Shayasta's son, Abdul Fatah, rushed forward to attack the assailants and struck down two or three men, but he could not cope with them single-handed, and was wounded and killed. The Marathas, having finished their work, left the *haram* and decamped, the Mughals knew not whither.

The night attack was a complete success, and greatly enhanced Shivaji's prestige. Raja Jaswant Singh, who had been sent by the emperor to assist the viceroy, came to condole with him in the morning, but he was confronted with a sarcastic remark, 'I thought, the Maharaja had died fighting for me in the last night's attack.' Popular suspicion fell upon the Raja, and in the Mughal camp his *bona fides* were seriously doubted. As for the Marathas, they looked upon their success as nothing short of a miracle, performed by the aid of divine inspiration.

Deeply mortified by defeat and humiliation, Shayasta Khan retired to Aurangabad, but immediately afterwards he

[7] Khwafi Khan gives a highly interesting account of the episode. Elliot, VII, pp. 269—71.

was recalled by the emperor and transferred (December 1, 1663), to the governorship of Bengal, Prince Muazzam was appointed to succeed Shayasta in the Deccan.

Sack of Surat, January 1664.

No less daring was the sack of Surat perpetrated by Shivaji in January 1664. At the head of 4,000 picked men, well-equipped with arms, he advanced upon Surat, and sent word to the governor and the wealthiest Muslim merchants that they should immediately satisfy him, or he would set fire to their town and loot all their property. No reply was received to this threatening demand, and Shivaji ordered the sack of the city with ruthless vengeance. When he raided the house of a Muhammadan merchant near the English factory, the English traders offered succour to the unfortunate victim of his greed. Exasperated by their resistance, he asked them to keep aloof or to pay three lakhs of rupees, and in case they failed to do either, he threatened to kill them all and raze their factory to the ground. The President of the factory, Oxenden, adopted a firm attitude. He refused to comply with his insulting demand, and informed him that they were ready to take up the challenge. By this time Shivaji had obtained enough to satiate his thirst for wealth, and with a booty amounting to more than a crore of rupees, he left Surat, carrying away gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and other articles of incalculable value.

Muazzam and Jai Singh against Shivaji.

A second army under the best and most trusted officers like Mirza Raja Jaisingh assisted by Diler Khan, was sent early in 1665 to deal with Shivaji. Aurangzeb had appointed Raja Jaisingh to take the place of Jaswant after his sorry part in the Poona episode. Jaisingh, the Kachwaha Prince of Jaipur, was a man of great talents, well-versed in Turki, Persian, Sanskrit, and Urdu, an adept in conversation, and a born diplomatist and tactician, well able to deal with

the intricacies of political affairs. His intimate contact with court life had made him familiar with all the varied forms of Muslim etiquette, and had given him an insight into Muslim character, which doubly increased his usefulness as a general of combined armies and a representative of the emperor in treating with foreign powers. The Mughal army entered the Maratha country without much opposition, and laid siege to the fort of Purandhar. The Prabhu Commander, Murar Baji Deshpande of Mahad, offered a gallant resistance in spite of his inadequate forces but he was killed in action. Even Raigarh, Shivaji's chief seat of power, was threatened. Convinced of the futility of further resistance, the Maratha leader offered to make peace with the Mughals. The treaty of Purandhar was concluded (June 1665), by which he agreed to surrender 23 of his forts, yielding a revenue of four lakhs of *hun* a year, keeping for himself 12 forts with "moderate revenues." His son, Shambhuji, was to be enrolled among the *Panjhazari* Mansabdars of the empire with a suitable *Jagir*, while Shivaji was to be excused by reason of his "late unwise and disloyal acts." Another clause was added to the treaty which provided that Shivaji would pay to the emperor 40 *lakhs* of *hūns* in 13 yearly instalments, if he were confirmed in the possession of certain lands in the Konkan and Balaghat by means of an imperial *farman*. Further, he agreed to assist the Mughals in their war against Bijapur.

The treaty was a great diplomatic triumph for Jaisingh, and marks a decisive stage in Shivaji's struggle with the empire. A great enemy was placated, and his co-operation was secured in Mughal attempts against Bijapur. Shivaji, on his part, proved as good as his word. He accepted imperial honours and gifts, and with his troops helped Raja Jaisingh in invading the Adil Shah's territories. The crowning triumph of Jaisingh's diplomacy was soon reached when he persuaded Shivaji to pay a visit to the Imperial Court.

Shivaji's visit to the Imperial Court (May 12, 1666).

Why did Shivaji agree to go to the imperial court in spite of the treaty of Purandhar to the contrary? Mr. Sardesai suggests that he strongly wished to see for himself what the emperor and his court were like, what were the sources of their strength, and how he should behave towards them in future.[8] Such a minute study at first hand, he says, was necessary for carrying into effect the grandiose plans of conquest which he was revolving in his mind. But against this view, we find that he agreed to Raja Jaisingh's proposal with considerable reluctance. The Raja "used a thousand devices" to overcome his deep-rooted repugnance, and held out to him the hopes of great reward and honour. Perhaps the glittering bait of the Deccan viceroyalty was dangled before his eyes, and the solemn assurances of the Rajput Raja dispelled whatever doubts he had in his mind about the emperor's sincerity and good faith. Besides, Shivaji coveted the little island of Jinjira which was an imperial possession. He carefully weighed the *pros* and *cons* of his visit. The ministers whom he consulted decided by a majority in favour of the acceptance of the proposal. Since Raja Jaisingh and his son, Kunwar Ramsingh, had made themselves personally responible for his safety at the imperial court, the Marathas suspected no foul play.

Shivaji reached Agra on the 9th of May along with his son Shambhuji, and three days later was granted an interview in the Hall of Public Audience. Kunwar Ramsingh offered 1,500 gold *muhars* as present (*nazr*) and Rs. 6,000 as an offering (*nisār*) for his Majesty's well-being after the customary fashion of the Indians, but the emperor's behaviour was highly improper. He greeted Shivaji by exclaiming from his throne "Come up, Shivaji Raja." Shivaji advanced forward, and when he had made his obeisance, he was escorted back to take his stand

[8] Main Currents of Maratha History, p. 71.

among the third grade *mansabdars*, and no further notice was taken of him.[9]

Shivaji was beside himself with wrath to find that he was accorded a place among the *Panjhazari* nobles and remonstrated with Kunwar Ramsingh in a loud voice. He cried out in anger that he would prefer death to hishonour and fell into a fainting fit. His outburst was heard by Aurangzeb who enquired what the matter was. The Rajput prince diplomatically answered: "The tiger is a wild beast of the forest. He feels oppressed by heat in a place like this and has been taken ill." Aurangzeb ordered rose water to be sprinkled on his face, and asked Ramsingh to convey him to his residence. All explanation of the Prince failed to allay Shivaji's resentment, and he openly charged the emperor with breach of faith. The words were reported to Aurangzeb by court spies, and Shivaji found himself placed under police surveillance.

While a prisoner in the hands of the emperor, Shivaji taxed his brains to hit upon a device to get out of this difficult situation. He feigned illness and began to send basketfuls of sweetmeats to be distributed among the Brāhmans and other mendicants. At first the baskets were searched by the guards, but after some time they slackened their watch, and allowed the baskets to pass unexamined. One day Shivaji and his son seated themselves in these baskets and effected their escape. They galloped to Mathura on horses, which they found ready at a distance of six miles from Agra. There, Shambhuji was entrusted to the care of a Maratha Brāhman who was asked to keep their escape as secret. Shivaji besmeared himself with ashes like Hindu ascetics, and in this holy disguise, passing through Allahabad, Benares, Gaya, the Gondwana country, and the territory of Golkunda and Bijapur on his way, reached the Deccan.

9 Khwafi Khan corroborates this account, Elliot, VII, pp. 276-77.

To his great surprise he found no sedition or treason in his dominion on his arrival. His government was carried on by his ministers, as if nothing serious had happened. Soon after his return, war was recommenced with renewed energy and determination.

War continues.

Jaisingh was greatly perturbed by the turn affairs had taken in the north. His son Ramsingh was suspected of conniving at Shivaji's escape, and was threatened with the loss of his *mansab*. Shivaji's arrival in the Deccan added to the Raja's difficulties, and he was filled with anxiety about the Mughal position. He suggested to the emperor a plan,[10] by which to murder Shivaji, but it did not materialise, and the Mirza Raja was recalled in May 1667. His place was taken by Prince Muazzam with Raja Jaswant Singh as the second in command. The aged Mirza Raja set out for the north, but died on the way at Burhanpur on July 2, 1667.

Shivaji made peace with the Mughals and during the years 1667—69 he kept quiet, and employed all his energies in consolidating his government. Aurangzeb was induced by Prince Muazzam and Raja Jaswant Singh to confer upon him the title of Raja and to assign *Jagirs* in Berar to Shambhuji, who was again elevated to the rank of a *Panjhazari* noble. But the

[10] Jaisingh had written to Jafar Khan, the minister, to obtain the emperor's sanction to a marriage between Shivaji's daughter and the Raja's son. These are the Raja's words :

"I am arranging matters in such a way that the wicked wretch Shiva will come to see me once, and in the course of his journey or return (our) clever men may get a favourable opportunity of disposing of) that luckless fellow in his unguarded moment at that place . . . ." It was a *mèsalliance* which a Rajput would have spurned, but Jaisingh reconciled himself to it for the benefit of the emperor.

Sarkar, Shivaji and His Times, p. 160.

peace was nothing more than a truce, and war was renewed again in 1670. The Mughal position was weaker than it was four years ago, and Shivaji succeeded in capturing the forts of Kondana, Purandhar, Mahuli, and Nander, and expelled the Mughal *Faujdar* from the Konkan. The quarrels among the imperial generals rendered the Mughal position worse in the Deccan, and Shivaji derived the fullest advantage from their weakness. In October 1670, he again looted Surat, ransacked the shops and houses, and carried off a booty amounting to 66 lakhs of rupees. The trade of the port was completely paralysed, and the fear of the Marathas killed all enterprise and ambition. So great was the dread of a recurrence of the visitation that whenever the alarm was raised that the Marathas were coming the people deserted the town and found refuge in distant places.

From 1670 to 1674 war continued without cessation and the Marathas won brilliant successes. Diler Khan's defeat in 1674 further crippled the Mughal power in the Deccan. Just at this time a rebellion of the Afghans occurred on the North-West Frontier, and Diler Khan was recalled by Aurangzeb.

Shivaji crowns himself, June 1674.

The brilliant successes gained by Shivaji and the lull in the situation suggested to him the grand idea of assuming the title of king. The formal ceremony took place in June 1674 at Raigarh amidst unequalled pomp and splendour. The celebration was accompanied by Vedic rites, and proclaimed to the world around that an independent Hindu kingdom was established in the teeth of Muslim opposition. The achievement implied a bold challenge to Mughal imperialism, and must have caused profound dismay at Delhi. To the Hindu mind it recalled the greatness and grandeur of the empire of Vijayanagar and its unending wars with the Muslim powers. History was repeating itself.

Shivaji's treasury was depleted by the huge expenditure, incurred on the celebration of the coronation, and he now found it necessary to renew his raids. Wars were fought with the Mughals, the Sultan of Bijapur, and the Abyssinians of Jinjira, but the grandest feat of Shivaji's military generalship was the invasion of the Karnatik in 1677-78 in alliance with the Qutb Shah. He captured Jinji, Vellore, and a number of other forts which considerably added to his prestige in the Deccan. Diler Khan was again sent to deal with him but his triumphs continued uninterrupted. His last campaign was in the Mughal Deccan where his soldiery plundered and devastated a number of villages and towns. Shivaji had great plans against the Mughals, but they were cut short by his untimely death on April 4, 1680, at the age of 53.

The last six years of Shivaji, 1674—80.

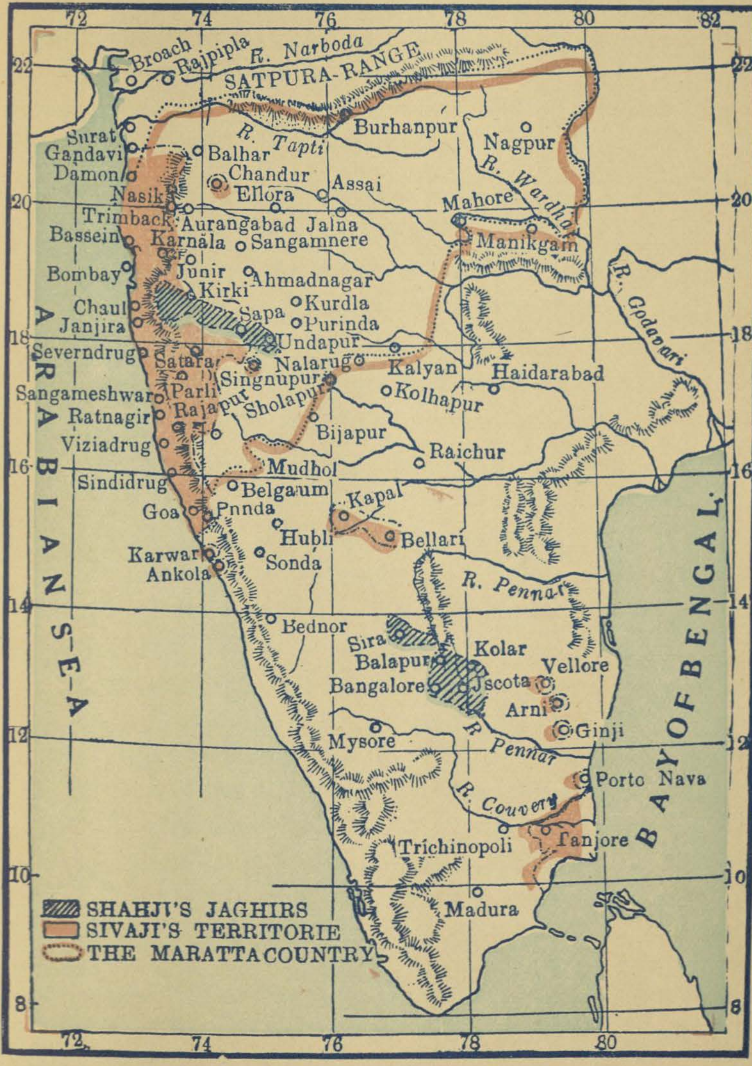
Shivaji's kingdom consisted of a narrow strip of land, comprising the Western Ghats and the Konkan between Kalyan and Goa, and towards the east it included Baglānā in the north, and then it ran southwards through the Nasik and Poona districts, enclosing the entire territory, now covered by the Satara and Kolapur districts. Towards the south his recent conquests brought under his sway the whole of the western Karnatik, extending from Belgaum to the bank of the Tungabhadrā opposite to the Bellary district of the Madras Presidency.

Extent of Shivaji's Kingdom.

European writers have expressed the view that the *Pax Marathica* was based on plunder and followed the principle of demanding payment for not ruling. This charge cannot be brought against Shivaji's government, whatever be its validity in regard to later Maratha rule. Shivaji was a great general and statesman who fully understood the need of the times. The institutions which he established were an improvement upon the existing order, and were well adapted to

Shivaji's government. The King and his Council.

KINGDOM OF SHIVAJI



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promote the well-being of his subjects and to protect them from the aggressions of his Muslim contemporaries.

The Raja was an autocrat, but he was assisted by a council of eight ministers called the Ashṭa Pradhān. It was only an advisory body and had none of the characteristics of a modern cabinet. The eight ministers were :—

(1) Peshwa (Prime Minister) who looked after the welfare of the state generally.

(2) Amātya or the Finance Minister, who checked the income and expenditure of the state.

(3) Mantrī or the Chronicler, who kept a diary of the king's daily doings and recorded everything that happened at Court.

(4) Sumant or the Foreign Secretary who kept an account of the king's relations with foreign powers.

(5) Sachiva or the Home Secretary who had charge of the king's correspondence. He supervised the draft of letters and affixed his seal on such letters and official documents.

(6) Pandit Rāo and Dānādhyaksha or the Head of the Ecclesiastical Department who like the Mughal *Sadr-i-Sudūr* looked after the grants to religious and learned men, decided theological disputes, and questions relating to custom.

(7) Senāpati or the Commander-in-Chief who was the general-in-chief of Shivaji's forces.

(8) Nyāyādhīsha or the Chief Judge.

There were 18 departments in the state, which were looked after by the ministers under the guidance of the King. The *Swarāj* territory, which was directly under the rule of Shivaji, was divided into a number of *Prānts* (districts), which were

all aggregated into three provinces, each being placed under a Viceroy. The system of Jagirs was abolished, and the officers were paid in cash—a practice which resulted in great administrative efficiency. Though the Maratha bureaucracy was well-adapted to meet the needs of the time, it contained within itself the seeds of dissolution. All members of the Council except the Pandit Rāo and the Nyāyādhīsha were expected to be, like the Mughal officers, military commanders, who, when they got an opportunity, tried to set up their own independent power, as happened during the later period of Maratha history. Shivaji guarded against this danger by making a rule that none of these offices should be hereditary, but after his death this practice was departed from with the result that all his plans were upset.[11]

Fiscal system.

As has been said before, Shivaji abolished the Jagir system because it tended to breed sedition and revolt. He even confiscated lands given to religious institutions and substituted cash payments for them.[12] He discouraged the farming system and introduced direct management. He did away with the Patel and the Kulkarni in the village and the Deshmukh and Deshpande in the district, and himself appointed new collectors. The old division of the country into Subahs, Sarkars, Parganas, and Mauzas was replaced by a fresh division into Prānts, Tarafs, and Mauzas. The Taraf was under a Havaldar or a Karkun, the Prānt under a Subahdar, Karkun, or Mukhiya Deshādhikārī, and sometimes several Prānts were entrusted to a Subahdar. The salary of a Subahdar was 400 *hūns* a year with a palanquin allowance of another 400. The land was surveyed by means of a *Kāṭhi* or measuring rod, and a record was kept of fields, and annual *Kabuliyats* were taken from

11 Ranade, Rise of the Maratha Power, p. 125.

12 Sardesai, Main Currents, p. 85.

those who held them. The state demand was at first fixed at 30 per cent, but later it was raised to 40 per cent by Shivaji, when all other taxes and cesses had been abolished.[13] The peasant was not left in a state of uncertainty ; he knew what he had to pay and, as Pringle Kennedy rightly observes, he seems to have been able to pay it without any great oppression.[14] The accounts were carefully kept and examined by officers under the king's personal control. Agriculture was encouraged, and in times of famine grain and money for buying seed were advanced to the peasants, and this amount was realised in instalments according to the means of the debtor.[15] The English traveller Fryer has drawn a highly unfavourable picture of Shivaji's revenue administration. He says that the officers were dishonest and selfish ; the peasants were oppressed and cruelly tortured, and in fact 'the great fish preyed on the little and even Bijapur rule was milder than that of Shivaji.' Fryer's account does not seem to have been based upon personal observation. The stories of Shivaji's benevolence and generosity, and his solicitude for the welfare of the peasantry that are current in Mahārāshṭra even to this day, point to the fact that he was a capable and humane administrator and not a mere despot who crushed the race of mortals to dust. Dellon, a French physician, who visited the western coast about the same time as Fryer, writes :—"His subjects are pagans like himself. But he tolerates all religions and is looked upon as one of the most politic princes in those parts."[16]

There were abuses in the government, and officers must have practised tyranny in many places, but to say that the whole country was in a state of terrible misery is an assump-

13 Sen, Maratha Administration, p. 73.
14 History of the Mughals, II, p. 125.
15 Sen, Maratha Administration, p. 73.
16 Sen, p. 90.

tion not founded on facts. Even Grant Duff admits that the districts were well managed, and derived much benefit from his wise and efficient administration.

No account of Shivaji's fiscal system would be complete without a word about the *Chauth*[17] and *Sardeshmukhi*. There is a great divergence of opinion among scholars about the levy of *Chauth* and all that can be done here is to give the views of leading writers on the subject.

Ranade says that the *Chauth* was not merely a military contribution without any moral or legal obligation, but a payment in lieu of protection against the invasion of a third power. He compares it with Wellesley's policy of Subsidiary Alliances and goes on to add :—

> "The demand for *Chauth* was subsequently added with the consent of the powers whose protection was undertaken against foreign aggression, on payment of fixed sums for the support of the troops maintained for such services. This was the original idea as worked out by Shivaji and it was the same idea which in Marquis of Wellesley's hand bore such fruit a hundred and twenty-five years later."[18]

According to Mr. Sardesai it was a tribute exacted from hostile or conquered territories.[19] The practice had existed in the western parts of India before Shivaji. He applied it to the countries which he overran, and promised in return immunity from further exaction and protection against any

17 The Chauth was ¼th of the revenue of a district that was invaded by the Marathas.

18 Rise of Maratha Power, pp. 224-25.

19 Main Currents, pp. 76-77.

other conqueror. Dr. Surendra Nath Sen differs from this view and holds that the *Chauth* was nothing but a contribution exacted by a military leader, but he apologetically adds that such exactions are not uncommon, and that this blackmail was justified by the exigencies of the situation.[20] Prof. J. N. Sarkar has reached a different conclusion. He writes:

> "The payment of *Chauth* merely saved a place from the unwelcome presence of the Maratha soldiers and civil underlings, but did not impose on Shivaji any corresponding obligation to guard the district from foreign invasion or internal disorder. The Marathas looked only to their own gain and not to the fate of their prey after they had left. The *Chauth* was only a means of buying off one robber, and not a subsidiary system for the maintenance of peace and order against all enemies. The lands subject to the *Chauth* cannot therefore be rightly called spheres of influence."[21]

Whatever the theory of the *Chauth*, it appears in practice to have been a merely military contribution. It was paid to ward off an attack of the Marathas and perhaps to prevent their reappearance in a country.

Desai is the corrupt form of the Sanskrit word Deśasvāmī, also called Deshmukh. The *Sardeshmukh* stood above several Desais or Deshmukhs, and his duty was to look after the work of the latter. He was paid for his services, and this payment was called *Sardeshmukhi*. Shivaji claimed to be the hereditary *Sardeshmukh* of his country.

20 Maratha Administration, p. 100.

21 Shivaji and His Times, p. 369.

The administration of justice was of a primitive kind. There were no regular courts and no systematic procedure. In villages the elders held *Panchāyats* to settle the disputes submitted to them. Ordeal was common, and we read of men fearlessly grasping red-hot iron or plunging their hand into boiled water or oil. Criminal cases were heard by the *Patel* who was an officer, having the qualifications of a modern Tahsildar. Appeals in civil and criminal cases were heard by the Brāhman Nyāyādhīsha, whose decisions were based upon the ancient *Smṛitis*. The final court of appeal was the *Hāzir Majlis* who seems to have disappeared after Shivaji's death.

Administration of Justice.

Shivaji was a born general and captain of war. He organised the military system, which he had inherited from his predecessors, and effected several improvements in it. The forts formed a special feature of his military administration. The chronicles mention that there were about 280 forts in his possession. In fact, the hill fort with the adjoining territory under a *Havaldar* formed the unit of Shivaji's government. He spent a large sum of money in repairing some of the more important forts like Rajgarh, Raigarh, Torna, and Partapgarh, and no effort was spared to keep their defences in a good condition. 'The people were taught to regard the fort,' writes Mr. Rawlinson, 'as their mother, as indeed it was for thither the inhabitants of the surrounding villages resorted in time of invasion.' Each fort was under a Maratha *Havaldar* with whom were associated a Brāhman Subahdar responsible for civil and revenue administration, and an officer of the Prabhu (Kāyastha) caste, who held charge of the grain and fodder supply, and of the military stores. The *Havaldar* had a garrison under his command, recruited from the various castes. Shivaji's political wisdom is reflected in the caste balance

Military Organisation.

which he tried to maintain in order to prevent conspiracy and revolt on the part of his officers.

Shivaji maintained a regular, standing army and provided quarters for it during the rainy season. At the time of his death his army, which was originally a small force, consisted of 30 to 40 thousand cavalry and one lakh of infantry drawn from the ranks of the peasantry. He had an elephant corps, which numbered 1,260 according to the Sabhāsad Bakhar, and also a fleet which contained about 200 men-of-war. The strength of his artillery arm is not precisely known, though Orme writes that 'he had previously purchased eighty pieces of cannon and lead sufficient for all his matchlocks from the French Director at Surat.'[22] The Sabhāsad mentions the use of the arms in battles, and says that the enemies were attacked with rockets, musket shots, bombs and stones.

The army had the same gradation of officers as obtained in the civil administration. The cavalry was divided into two classes—the *Bargirs* and the *Shiledars*. The former were supplied with horses and arms by the state while the latter had to find their own equipment. The unit in the cavalry was formed by 25 troopers ; over them was placed a *Havaldar*, and five *Havaldars* formed one Jumla under a *Jumladar*. Ten *Jumladars* made a Hazari charge, and five Hazaris were placed under *Panjhazari*, who was given a salary of 2,000 *hūns*. The *Panjhazaris* were under the command of a *Sarnobat*. For every 25 troopers, a farrier and a water-carrier were provided by the state.

The infantry arm was similarly organised. It was divided into regiments, brigades and divisions. The smallest unit was formed by nine soldiers who were under the command of a Naik. Over five such Naiks was placed a *Havaldar*, two or

22 Fragments, p. 38.

three of whom formed the charge of a *Jumladar*. Ten *Jumladars* were under the command of a *Hazari*, and over seven *Hazaris* was placed a *Sarnobat*.

The army consisted of both Hindus and Muhammadans and made no distinctions. In time of need Shivaji could also call the feudal forces of the Maratha Wattandars, but he did not place reliance upon them. Soldiers were paid in cash or by an assignment on the district governments. They had full confidence in their leader and loved to follow him to the field of battle. Those who served him loyally were rewarded, and the children and widows of those who fell in battle were well looked after by the state. His liberality attracted men from far and wide, and even veteran warriors felt the magic of his powerful personality, and regarded it a privilege to follow him. Shivaji's military camp was much better than that of later times. He was always anxious to maintain discipline in the army and never allowed anything which might lower the *morale* of his troops. He had drawn up elaborate regulations for his army which may be summarised thus :

> "The army should return to cantonments in the home territory during the rainy season. Grain, fodder, and medicines were to be stored for the horses and thatched huts for the troopers. Soon after Dashehra the army marched out of the cantonments and for eight months it subsisted in foreign territories. No women, female slaves, or dancing girls should be permitted. Anyone breaking the rule should be put to death. Women and children of the enemy should be protected. Brāhmans were to be let alone and should not be accepted as sureties, when contributions were levied from a conquered country. Precious articles seized by the troops during their sojourn abroad should be sent to the treasury. Those who kept back anything should be severely dealt with."

These regulations were strictly enforced. Khwāfi Khan writes in this connection :

> "He (Shivaji) laid down the rule that whenever a place was plundered, the goods of poor people, *pulsiyah* (copper money), and vessels of brass and copper, should belong to the man who found them ; but other articles, gold and silver, coined or uncoined, gems, valuable stuffs and jewels, were not to belong to the finder, but were to be given up without the smallest deduction to the officers, and to be by them paid over to Shivaji's government."[23]

During the sack of Surat the Marathas did not touch cloth, copper utensils, and other insignificant articles.[24] No soldier was enlisted in the army unless he furnished security for good behaviour. The officers were paid in advance, and had to account for the *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* collected by them. Merit was recognised and faithful service was fitly rewarded.

Shivaji's achievement and character.

Khwāfi Khan's condemnation of Shivaji, reiterated by European writers, has been proved to be baseless by modern research, and, thanks to the labour of Indian scholars, we have been able to form a just estimate of his character and policy. Like Haider Ali and Ranjit Singh after him, Shivaji possessed creative genius of a high order. From the son of a petty Jagirdar in a Muslim State, he rose to the position of a powerful king, who struck terror into the hearts of his opponents, and founded an independent Hindu State in the teeth of Muslim opposition. The reader will easily gather from the account of his life given before what a great statesman and general he was. He evolved order out of chaos, united the scattered fragments of the Maratha people into a nation,

23 Elliot, VII, p. 261.

24 Rawlinson, Shivaji, p. 98.

and by the example of his own personal heroism, led them on to heights of glory of which they had never dreamt before. Every raid brought fresh renown, and every conquest extended the boundaries of his small kingdom, which became an eyesore not only to the Sultanate of Bijapur but also to the mighty Mughal empire. Shivaji was a rare admixture of the ideal and the practical. As the champion of cows and Brāhmans he appealed to the traditional religious impulses of the Hindu race, and succeeded remarkably in organising an effective protest against Muslim bigotry, which overshadowed the entire land from Delhi to Daulatabad. He saw clearly the consequences of the imperial policy of annexing the south, and strove all his life to make it impossible of realisation. Clear in his ideals which he pursued with a steadfastness that has few parallels in the political annals of our country, Shivaji possessed, in a rare measure, what Professor J. N. Sarkar calls, the unfailing sense of reality in politics. The task of a statesman is not merely to envisage a great purpose, but to see how far his resources can carry him. Shivaji had the gift of grasping quickly the possibilities of a situation, and knew where he must stop. It is true he followed the maxim of 'safety first,' but even here his actions were not the results of 'mean and grovelling calculations.' He organised an administration which was in many respects more efficient than that of the Mughals. The welfare of the common people was ever dear to his heart, and there is ample evidence of his charity, justice and benevolence. It is this which led the Marathas to regard him 'as a superman, a divine agency to free them from the yoke of Muslims.' It would not have been so, if Shivaji were a tyrant or a mere robber chief, equal in treachery and finesse only to the devil, as Khwāfi Khan would have us believe. Shivaji gave the Marathas peace and order, and to a persecuted community he appeared as the star of a new hope before whom all ugly shadows melted away, and the hearts of his co-

religionists were filled with joy in expectation of the fulfilment of a great purpose. It was the strength and vigour he imparted to the political and social system of the Marathas that defied Aurangzeb's might even after his death. The abandonment of his policy by his successors precipitated the ruin of the state, which he had founded with so much energy, statesmanship and foresight.

In private life Shivaji maintained a high standard of morality, considering the times in which he lived. Polygamy and concubinage were common among men of high rank, but all authorities agree that his elevated morality and loftiness of purpose were in striking contrast with the sensual indulgence, meanness and trickery of his contemporaries. He was illiterate, but his powerful mind was capable of comprehending the most intricate questions of politics. He was a shrewd judge of men, and his discernment of human character was as unerring as it was quick. By the sheer force of his native genius, he outshone all his ministers, and successfully imposed his will upon them. In diplomacy and statecraft, he had few equals in his age, and his enemies were taken by surprise at the rapidity and suddenness with which he altered his positions and executed his plans. He was intensely devoted to his religion. The plant of orthodoxy nurtured by his mother with tender care and affection amidst circumstances of depression, which were enough to crush all enterprise out of an ordinary woman, at last grew into a tree, and bore rich fruit. He became a champion of Hinduism, and his readiness to defend it at all times against Muslim aggression brought to him the sympathy of Hindus all over Hindustan. His Guru Rām Dās, by his influence, fed this fountain of faith, and when Shivaji organised his government, he devised measures to promote the interests of Hindu religion. He granted pensions to learned Brāhmans and ascetics, built hermitages, and offered encouragement to Sanskrit studies. One *man* of rice was every

year granted to a Brāhman who mastered one of the Vedas, and two to him who studied two and so on in increasing proportion. Students were given stipends, and scholars from distant lands came to seek his patronage. He was interested in the cause of learning and employed learned Brāhmanas to find synonyms for current Persian words, and their labours resulted in the compilation of the *Rājvyavahār Kosh*.

But Shivaji was not a bigot. He treated even Muslim saints with respect, and granted lands and annuities to Muslim shrines. He waged relentless war against the Musalmans, but he stopped it as soon as they acknowledged his overlordship. Even Khwāfi Khan who is in no way friendly to him speaks of his great qualities in eulogistic terms:

> ". . . But he made it a rule that whenever his followers went plundering, they should do no harm to the mosques, the Book of God, or the woman of any one. Whenever a copy of the sacred Kuran came into his hands he treated it with respect, and gave it to some of his Musalman followers. When the women of any Hindu or Muhammadan were taken prisoners by his men he watched over them until their relations came with a suitable ransom to buy their liberty."[25]

The same writer says in another place:

> "Shivaji had always striven to maintain the honour of the people in his territories. He persevered in a course of rebellion, in plundering caravans, and troubling mankind; but he entirely abstained from other disgraceful acts, and was careful to maintain the honour of women and children of Muhammadans when they fell into his

25. Elliot, VII, p. 260.

hands. His injunctions upon this point were very strict, and anyone who disobeyed them received punishment."[26]

Shivaji well merited the kingship which was adorned by his valour and virtue. He was ambitious but ambition did not blind him to moral considerations. He was generous to his foes and chivalrous to women when they fell into his hands. The charges of fraud and treachery, brought against him by his enemies, have failed to stand the test of a critical examination. Indeed, the unbiassed enquirer is often struck by his regard for Muslim religion and his generous treatment of the weak and the defenceless. Mr. Rawlinson is right when he says :

> "He was never deliberately or wantonly cruel. To respect women, mosques, and non-combatants, to stop promiscuous slaughter after a battle, to release and dismiss with honour captured men and officers . . . these are surely no light virtues."[27]

The Maratha State built up by Shivaji did not last beyond his lifetime. It was a military organisation like that of Ranjit Singh, and was swept away by the very forces which had brought it into existence. Caste cannot be said to have been the chief cause of its decline. The real causes were the autocratic character of government and the reappearance of feudalism after Shivaji's death. The tendency towards disintegration became more and more manifest as time passed, and Maratha Jagirdars began to act as independent despots, concerned with their selfish interests and not with those of the larger group to which they belonged. The state perished in the scramble of rival chiefs for power and wealth. Treachery and cunning were commonly used as political weapons, and the virtues of truthfulness and honesty were ignored by those

26 Elliot, VII, p. 305.

27 Shivaji, p. 99.

who wielded power. The dearth of a leader like Shivaji disorganised the national life which he had created. Lastly, the wars waged by the Marathas and Mughals against each other did harm to both parties. They destoryed the stability of the Maratha State and seriously hindered national consolidation and growth.

Mention has previously been made of the new regulations which Aurangzeb issued soon after his accession to the throne.

Puritanism in action.

They were followed by certain others, which reveal his serious and gloomy outlook on life and his desire to make everything conform to orthodox Islam. In the eleventh year of the reign, he banned music at Court on the plea that he had no time for amusements, and dismissed the court singers and musicians who had been employed by former kings. The musicians about a thousand in number gathered together on a Friday, having 20 biers in their midst, and cried aloud with grief after the fashion of the Hindus, when they carry the dead body to the burning ground. The emperor who happened to go to the mosque at the time enquired the cause of this sorrow, whereupon the bewailing musicians replied that they were going to bury music. Aurangzeb's wit flew to his rescue and he observed, 'Bury her deep so that she may not raise her head again.' The nobles and Amirs continued to enjoy music, and the regulation remained a dead letter except in large cities of the empire.

Other regulations followed in rapid succession. The weighing of the emperor on his birthdays was stopped, and the Hindu mode of saluting each other was no longer to be followed by the courtiers. They were to repeat the formula '*Salam alekum*' (Peace be on you) in saluting each other, but its use in the presence of the emperor was forbidden. Astrology was treated with contempt. Astrologers were not allowed to prepare almanacs, but belief in their knowledge was so deep-rooted

that it could not be done away with by legislation. The birthday and coronation festivals were simplified, and the *darshan* was abolished. Wine drinking was forbidden, and the Kotwal was ordered to cut one hand and one foot of all those who dealt in spirituous liquor. *Bhang* was similarly condemned, and not a day passed, when the pots and vessels in which it was prepared were not broken by the police. Like Firuz Tughluq before him, the emperor forbade women from visiting the shrines of holy men.

Besides these purely Islamic ordinances, the emperor issued certain rules to improve the manners and morals of his subjects of all classes. Dancing girls and public women were allowed to choose between marriage and exile, but the Amirs and nobles of Mughal India could not do without them. Fashion was discouraged, and effeminacy in dress was ridiculed. Gaming halls were penalised, and drastic penalties were laid down for breaches of this law. During the Holi festival obscene songs in public streets were not permitted, and those who snatched faggots from the people by force were punished. The Muharram processions were also stopped. *Sati* was forbidden, but the royal edict remained a mere pious wish, as is clear from the testimony of European travellers.

Reactionary measures.

The reaction against the spirit of toleration, begun in the reign of Shahjahan, now became more pronounced, and the administration assumed a theocratic appearance. Aurangzeb had given evidence of bigotry in his early life when, as Viceroy of Gujarat, he desecreted the temple of Chintamani in 1644 by slaughtering a cow in it and turning it into a mosque. Now, he found an opportunity to give a free rein to his orthodox ideas. On the 9th April, 1669, he issued a general order 'to demolish all the schools and temples of the infidels and to put down their religious teachings and practices.' Some of the most famous shrines like the temples of Somnāth in Gujarat,

Vishwanāth in Benares, and Keshava Rai in Mathura were demolished, and the *Faujdar* of the last place was ordered to put down with a high hand all protests on the part of the Hindus against the imperial policy.[28] Later, an order was sent to destroy the temple of Keshava Rai completely and rename Mathura as Islamabad. Officers were employed to enforce the emperor's regulations, and their activities assumed such proportions that a *darogha* had to be appointed to supervise their work.

The custom duty on all commodities for sale was fixed at 2½ per cent of the value in the case of Muslims and 5 per cent in the case of Hindus. Later in May 1667, the Muslims were wholly exempted from such duty, and the state had to forego a large income. Another device by which the emperor sought to induce conversion to Islam was to offer rewards and posts to those Hindus who renounced their faith. The state became a large missionary institution which extended its favour to renegades, and made liberal promises irrespective of merit and efficiency.

This was not all. In 1668 Hindu fairs were also stopped throughout the empire, and the famous festival of Diwali (feast of lamps) was forbidden, and could be celebrated only outside cities. The emperor committed a great blunder in excluding the Hindus from public offices. The acquisition of a Qanungoship on condition of embracing Islam passed into a proverb, and Prof. Sarkar observes that there are still in the Punjab families in whose *farmans* this condition is clearly laid

28 A full account of these measures is given in the *Masir-i-Alamgiri*—Elliot, VII, pp. 184-85. Also J. N. Sarkar's History of Aurangzeb, III, pp. 248—90. Raja Birsingh Bundela had spent 33 lakhs of rupees on the temple of Keśava Rai. It was a splendid temple, and its destruction led to a fanatical outbreak of the Jats at Mathura.

Aurangzeb built a mosque which still stands on the site of the temple of Viśwanātha destroyed in 1669.

down.[29] In 1671 the emperor issued an order that the rent collectors in the *Khalsa* lands must be Muslims, and that all viceroys and *taluqdars* must dismiss their Hindu *peshkars* (Readers) and *Diwans* (Accountants). But the provincial administration could not get on without Hindu *peshkars*, and the emperor afterwards allowed half the posts to be held by Hindus.[30]

It is astonishing that a great king like Aurangzeb should have lost all sense of proportion in the glare of religious zeal. He ordered the converts from Hinduism to be seated on elephants and carried in procession with considerable display through the streets of the town. In March 1695, all Hindus except the Rajputs were forbidden to ride *palkis* or elephants or horses and to carry arms.[31]

Aurangzeb's anti-Hindu measures caused much discontent, and provoked several fearful risings. The first in point of time was the rebellion of Gokal Jat in the neighbourhood of Mathura against the policy of Abdunnabi, the *faujdar* of that city, from August 1660 till May 1669. Abdunnabi was a trusted agent of the emperor, and enjoyed the reputation of being a 'religious man.' Soon after taking charge of his office, he built a mosque in the heart of the city (1661-62) on the ruins of a Hindu temple, and in 1666, he removed the carved stone railing which had been presented to Keshava Rai's temple by Dara Shukoh. This infuriated the Jat peasantry of the district and their leader Gokal. They killed the *faujdar* and plundered the pargana of Sadabad. The emperor's anger was roused when lawlessness spread on to other districts. Several gene-

Rebellion of Gokal Jat, 1669.

29 History of Aurangzeb, III, p. 277.

30 History of Aurangzeb, III, p. 277.

31 History of Aurangzeb, III, p. 278.

rals were sent against the Jats, and in a bloody encounter which took place 20 miles from Tilpat, Gokal was captured with his family. He was brought to Agra where on the platform of the police office his limbs were hacked to pieces, and his family was forced to embrace Islam. But Gokal's death did not end the trouble. Other leaders took his place, and the insurrectionary movement continued by fits and starts till 1686, when the Jats again rose in revolt under the leadership of Raja Ram. Raja Ram was defeated and slain by the imperialists, but his nephew (brother's son) Churaman carried on the resistance on a large scale to the end of Aurangzeb's reign. The Jats after the emperor's death became very powerful, and their part in the destruction of the Mughal empire will be described in another place.

Satnāmi Revolt, May 1672.

Another formidable rebellion was that of the Satnāmis in the districts of Narnol and Mewat. They were also called Mundiyas, because they completely shaved off their hair. The word Satnāmi means a believer in *Satnām* or the good name (of God). A Hindu historian, who probably had bitter sectarian prejudice against them, describes them as 'filthy and wretched people who made no distinctions between Hindus and Musalmans and who ate pigs and the unclean animals, and saw nothing blameworthy in sin and immorality.' But Khwāfi Khan's picture of the Satnāmis is not so bad. He says:

> "These men dress like devotees but they nevertheless carry on agriculture and trade, though their trade is on a small scale. In the way of their religion they have dignified themselves with the title of 'Good name,' this being the meaning of *Satnām*. They are not allowed to acquire wealth in any but a lawful calling. If anyone attempts to wrong or oppress them by force, or by

exercise of authority, they will not endure it. Many of them have weapons and arms."[32]

This description by an unfriendly Muslim writer shows the Satnāmis to have been a respectable and valiant sect. The immediate cause of the revolt was a dispute between a Satnāmi cultivator and a foot-soldier who was keeping watch over a field. The soldier broke the Satnāmi's head by a blow and thus stirred the fanaticism of the whole tribe. They belaboured the soldier who very nearly died. When the local Shiqdar tried to arrest the culprits, the Satnāmis assembled in large numbers and broke out into open rebellion. The *faujdar* of Narnol marched against them but was repulsed and compelled to seek refuge in flight. When the emperor heard of this outbreak, he sent forces, but they were all beaten by the zealous sectaries. So helpless was the Mughal army against them that it began to credit the rebels with magic and witchcraft, and incredible stories about them became current in the country. The emperor who was known as a living saint (*Zinda Pir*) tried to beat them with their own weapons. He wrote some prayers and incantations with his own hand, and had them sewn in the imperial banners. A terrible battle followed in which about 2,000 Satnāmis were slain, and the rest fled from the field of battle. The rebellion was quelled with ruthless violence, and the country was cleared of the 'infidels.'

The resistance of the Sikhs.

The Sikhs also made an effective protest against Aurangzeb's high-handed policy. A brief sketch of their relations towards the empire of Delhi will suffice to enable the reader to understand the genesis of their revolt. Guru Nānak, the founder of the sect, was essentially a practical reformer. The only way of salvation according to him lay through devotion to God

32 Elliot, VII, p. 294.

combined with good actions. He had no faith in Brāhmans and Mullahs and attached no value to the externals of religion. The outstanding features of the system propounded by him were its non-sectarian character and its reconciliation with secular life.[33]

The next three *gurus* who followed him walked in his footsteps and addressed themselves mainly to religious and social reform. The fourth guru Rām Dās had an interview with Akbar, who was much pleased with him and granted him a piece of land on which he dug a tank called Amritsar or the 'Pool of Immortality.' The fifth *guru* Arjun who succeeded to the *gaddi* in 1581 was a powerful organiser. He edited the *Granth Sāhib* and transformed the Sikhs into a compact community with definite ideals. He incurred Jahangir's displeasure by giving help to his rebellious son Khusrau, and was thrown into prison where he was tortured to death in 1606.

The Sikhs were exasperated at this murder of their *guru*, and they began to cherish a grudge towards the Muslim empire. They formed themselves into a military community under their *guru* Har Govind (1606—45) who combined in himself the qualities of a warrior, saint and sportsman. Nothing worthy of mention was done by his two immediate successors, but matters reached a crisis when the ninth *guru* Tegh Bahadur was murdered by Aurangzeb in 1675.

The cause of this ghastly tragedy was the *guru's* protest against the attacks on Hinduism and the desercration of holy shrines. He was summoned to Delhi to answer the charge of fomenting sedition in the country and was thrown into prison, where on his refusal to embrace Islam, he was tortured to death after a few days. According to another account, he was asked either to accept Islam or to perform a miracle to prove his *guruship*. He chose the latter alternative, and

33 Narang, Transformation of Sikhism, pp. 11, 13.

wrote a charm with his hand on a piece of paper, which, he said, would save his neck from the sword. When his head was struck off by the executioner, the paper was found to contain the words: *Sir dia sar na dia, i.e.,* he gave his head but not his secret.

Whatever the manner of the *guru's* death, it sent a thrill of horror throughout the Punjab, and the whole country began to burn with indignant revenge.[34] His son and successor Guru Govind Singh swore to avenge his father's death. But how could a religious fraternity contend against the might and majesty of the Mughal empire? After a serious examination of the whole position, he reached the conclusion that success could be gained only by turning Sikhism into a military creed. He grimly resolved to subvert the empire, and by his example, as Cunningham says, from the midst of social degradation and religious corruption, he called up simplicity of manners, singleness of purpose, and enthusiasm of desire.[35] The ceremony of baptism which he introduced consisted in the drinking of water consecrated by a sword or dagger. Caste was condemned, and those who took part in the communion had to eat something prepared by mixing flour, butter and sugar. The new brotherhood came to be known as *Khalsa,* and the *guru* made it obligatory for every member to carry always on his person five things, all beginning with *K*—*Kanghi* (comb), *Kach* (breeches reaching to the knee), *Kard* (knife), *Kesh* (hair), *Kripan* (sword). The members of the Khalsa now dedicated their lives like the followers of Ignatius Loyola to the service of the Mother Church, and vowed vengeance upon her enemies.

The *guru* wholly changed his mode of life. He lived like a prince amidst regal pomp and splendour, organised an

[34] Transformation of Sikhism, p. 67.

[35] History of the Sikhs, p. 67.

army, built hill forts, and began to fight with the hill chieftains whom he defeated in battle. The Mughal government was roused by his conquest, and forces were sent to suppress him. He suffered a defeat ; two of his sons, captured by the Mughals, were executed with great cruelty, and the *guru* was himself a fugitive for some time. The imperialists kept up the pursuit, but they were defeated at Muktesar, where the *guru* built a tank which is still held sacred by the Sikhs.

Now Aurangzeb's end was drawing nigh. After a stormy career Guru Govind Singh had settled peacefully at Anandpur, where he received the imperial summons to present himself at court. He expressed his readiness to go, but enumerated the wrongs which he had suffered at the hands of the Mughals. The emperor promised him an honourable reception and the *guru* started to meet him in the Deccan, but on his way he received the news (1707) that the emperor had died.

Aurangzeb's successor Bahadur Shah invited the *guru* to accompany him to the Deccan, where a year after he was murdered (1708) by an Afghan fanatic.

The *guru* who was a far-sighted man nominated Bandā as his military successor, but fearing the disputes that might arise about the *gaddi* of *guruship* he abolished it, and entrusted the spiritual headship of the Sikhs to five of his disciples, saying, " I shall ever be present among five Sikhs. Whenever there are five Sikhs of mine assembled, they shall be priests of all priests."

The Jeziya.

But the most important of all these measures of Aurangzeb was the revival of the Jeziya on April 2, 1679, throughout all the provinces " with the object of curbing the infidels, and of distinguishing the land of the faithful from an infidel's land."[36] The Hindus of Delhi and the neighbouring country assembled in large numbers on the river

[36] Elliot, VII, p. 296.

front of the palace to beseech the emperor to withdraw his edict. But no heed was paid to their entreaties. Then they had recourse to another form of protest, and Khwāfi Khan has described the scene in these words :

> "One day, when he went to public prayer in the great mosque on the Sabbath, a vast multitude of Hindus thronged the road from the palace to the mosque with the object of seeking relief. Money-changers and drapers, all kinds of shopkeepers from the Urdu *bazar*, mechanics, and workmen of all kinds, left off work and business, and pressed into the way. Notwithstanding orders were given to force a way through, it was impossible for the emperor to reach the mosque. Every moment the crowd increased, and the emperor's equipage was brought to a standstill. At length, an order was given to bring out the elephants and direct them against the mob. Many fell trodden to death under the feet of the elephants and horses. For some days the Hindus continued to assemble in great numbers and complain, but at length they submitted to pay the Jeziya."[37]

The Jeziya was levied with great rigour and a large staff of officers was employed to collect it.[38] The revenue yielded was considerable, and in Gujarat alone it amounted to five lakhs of rupees a year. According to Professor J. N. Sarkar, the policy underlying the Jeziya was to increase the number of Muslims by putting pressure upon the Hindus.[39] Manucci

37 Elliot, VII, p. 296.

38 In countries where the standard was a silver one it was 12 *dirhams* for ordinary men and 24 for *zimmis* in better circumstances, and for the rich 48. Encyclopædia of Islam, p. 1051.

39 Histoy of Aurangzeb, III, p. 274.

says Aurangzeb did it for two reasons: first, because by this time his treasures had begun to shrink owing to expenditure on his campaigns ; secondly, to force the Hindus to become Muhammadans. Many who were unable to pay turned Muhammadans to obtain relief from the insults of the tax-collectors.[40] In Aurangzeb's defence it may be said that he was exasperated by the formidable risings of the Hindus that had broken out both in the north and south. War with the Marathas was going on ; the Satnāmis had revolted in 1672 ; and the Sikhs had declared open war upon the empire in 1675 after the murder of their *guru* Tegh Bahadur. The emperor had outraged the cherished prejudices of the Hindus, and the Hindus had aroused his fierce wrath by their defiance. Conciliation between the two was impossible. The result was a cruel misunderstanding and a sanguinary conflict between the opposing forces, which paved the way to complete ruin.

The Rajput War, 1679.

The veteran Raja Jaswant Singh, who had been appointed *faujdar* of Jamrud, a Mughal outpost on the Khaibar Pass, died there on the 10th December, 1678. Aurangzeb who had already launched his crusade against the Hindus, welcomed the event, and forthwith began to make preparations to bring the state of Marwar under his control. Muslim officers were appointed, and the whole country was brought under direct Mughal rule. Orders were issued for the demolition of

[40] Storia, II, p. 234.

"The Jeziya existed in Turkey down to the time of the Crimean War. By the law of 10th May, 1885, the Jeziya as a tax on the free exercise of religion was replaced by a tax for exemption from military service. The last trace of it only disappeared after the Revolution in Turkey since when Christians also do military service." Encyclopædia of Islam, p. 1052.

temples and the revival of the Jeziya. Indra Singh, a grand-nephew of Jaswant Singh, was made the Raja of Jodhpur on payment of 36 lakhs of rupees.

In February 1679, the two widowed Ranis of Jaswant Singh arrived at Lahore, and gave birth to two sons, one of whom died, and the other Ajit Singh lived to secure the *gaddi* of Marwar after terrible fighting by the aid of the skill, valour, and devotion of Durgā Dās, a son of the late Raja's minister Askaran. Aurangzeb wished to keep Ajit Singh in his *haram* and to bring him up after the fashion of Mughal princes.[41] His intention is corroborated by the fact that the fictitious Ajit Singh, whom he caused to be smuggled into his palace, was brought up as a Muslim and was given a Muslim name. The Rajputs were bewildered at this extraordinary proposal of the emperor. They pleaded with him to recognise the legitimacy of Ajit's claim, but he turned a deaf ear to all their entreaties. The Rathors, determined to fight to the last man in defence of the honour of their ruling house, turned to Durgā Dās, for help in this crisis. Durgā Dās's name will ever rank among the immortals of Rajput history. Devoted to the royal house of Marwar and endowed with valour and statesmanship of no mean order, Durgā Dās was a man of stainless honour, who never broke his word, and even in dealing with his enemies, never employed treachery or base intrigue to accomplish his ends. At considerable personal risk, he carried on the battle of Marwar's freedom for a

41 Contrast with this the treatment which Durgā Dās meted out to Aurangzeb's grandson and grand-daughter (Akbar's children) who were completely in his hands after their father's flight. The Begum who was only 14 years of age was properly looked after and restored to Aurangzeb. When the emperor spoke of appointing a tutoress for her, she informed him that Durgā Dās had been so attentive to her welfare that he had secured for her a Muslim misress from Ajmer under whose tuition she had already studied the Quran and committed it to her memory. Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, V, p. 282.

quarter of a century, and scorned the temptations, which the wealth and power of the Mughals placed in his way. He hit upon a stratagem to escape from the embarrassing situation in which he was placed. With the Ranis, dressed in male attire, Durgā Dās escaped with Ajit Singh and safely conveyed him to Jodhpur in July 1679. Aurangzeb quietly substituted a milkman's little son for Ajit, and declared that the boy whose cause Durgā Dās had espoused was not a true son of Jaswant Singh.

Aurangzeb at once ordered an invasion of Marwar, and himself proceeded to direct the operations from Ajmer. The forces were under the command of Prince Akbar and Tahawur Khan, the *Faujdar* of Ajmer. The Rajputs were defeated and Aurangzeb divided the whole country into districts, each of which was entrusted to a Mughal *Faujdar*. It was a clear case of wanton annexation.

The Rani, who was a Mewar princess, appealed to Rana Raj Singh for help, and the latter like a true Sisodia took up the cause of the orphan prince. Mewar could not be safe, if Marwar was annexed to the empire. Like other Hindus Jeziya was demanded from the Rana, who was already alarmed at the fanatical policy of Aurangzeb. Some of the holiest shrines of the Hindus had been descrated, and as the premier chief in Rajasthan, the Rana felt it his duty to rise up in defence of the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his gods. Self-interest as well as higher considerations impelled him to make common cause with Durgā Dās.

Aurangzeb left for Udaipur, and a large Mughal army poured into Mewar territory. The Rana fled into the hills, and the emperor satiated his wrath by seizing all his property and ordering the demolition of 123 temples in the environs of Udaipur and 63 at Chittor.[42] The state of Amber, though

[42] Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, III, p. 341.

friendly to the emperor, was also treated severely and 66 temples were destroyed. Having left Prince Akbar in charge of Chittor, Aurangzeb returned to Ajmer.

The Rajputs continued fighting and struck terror into the hearts of their opponents. Indignant at the failure of Akbar, Aurangzeb sent his son, Azam, to deal with Mewar, and transferred Akbar to Marwar. There the prince entered into a treasonable conspiracy with the Rajputs and declared that Aurangzeb 'had forfeited the throne by his violation of the Islamic canon law.' He crowned himself emperor, made Tahawur Khan his premier nobleman, and raised him to the rank of 7,000 horse. The Rajputs stimulated his hopes by dwelling upon the splendid results of the co-operation of Mughals and Rajputs. Aurangzeb was dumbfounded at the news of Akbar's treason and cried out in wild despair, "I am now defenceless. The young hero has got a fine opportunity. Why then is he delaying now?" If Akbar had quickly marched towards Ajmer, he would have defeated his father and greatly strengthened his position.

But he wasted his time in pleasure, and Aurangzeb speedily arranged for the defence of Ajmer. Prince Muazzam joined him with a large army, and other reinforcements also arrived which considerably swelled the numbers of the imperialists. Akbar was ready to begin the attack when Aurangzeb's diplomacy frustrated all his plans. He wrote a letter to the prince and managed that it should reach Durgā Dās. He congratulated the prince on having befooled the Rajputs in accordance with his instructions and asked him 'to bring them into a position where they would be under the fire of both armies.' Khwāfi Khan discredits the story, but it was current in the Mughal camp at the time.[43]

[43] Elliot, VII, p. 304.

This letter caused a division in the ranks of Akbar's supporters. His army was broken up and he himself fled from the field of battle. But Durgā Dās and Jai Singh (Rai Singh's successor) loyally stood by him, and honoured their pledges to the last by giving him shelter. When they saw that the prince would not be free from danger in Northern India, they safely escorted him to Shambhuji, son of Shivaji, in the Deccan. From there he fled to Persia where he died in 1704.

War with Mewar continued, and both sides suffered heavy losses. At last peace was patched up between the two in 1681 by which Jai Singh ceded certain districts in lieu of the Jeziya. He was made Rana and received a *mansab* of 5,000.

Akbar's junction with Shambhuji upset Aurangzeb, and he concentrated all his energy on the Deccan war, and slackened his efforts in Rajputana. The Rathors employed the guerilla tactics under the leadership of Durgā Dās, who carried on the war of independence for 30 years till 1709. After Aurangzeb's death, his son Bahadur Shah acknowledged the claim of Ajit Singh to the *gaddi* of Mewar.

The Rajput war drained Aurangzeb's resources in men and money and lowered his prestige all over Hindustan. The defection of Akbar encouraged the enemies of the emperor to count upon the dissensions of the royal family for the success of their plans. The Rajputs were alienated. In the past men like Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Raja Jaswant Singh had shed their blood in the service of the empire, but henceforward the Rajputs withheld their support, and Aurangzeb had to carry on the war in the Daccan singlehanded. The ruin that followed was inevitable. A great empire and little minds go ill together, and Aurangzeb who was a zealous Puritan turned friends into foes by his ungenerous treatment. The pursuit of a wrong ideal in full disregard of political expediency strengthened the forces of reaction, and anarchy began to raise its head where at one time peace and layalty had reigned supreme.

Aurangzeb and the Shias of the Deccan.

Shahjahan was induced to attempt the conquest of the Deccan by political and religious motives. The Deccan Sultans were Shias, and as an orthodox Sunni the emperor felt bound to extinguish their power. The Sultan of Golkunda had made peace, and the siege was raised on March 30, 1656. The kingdom of Bijapur was also invaded by Aurangzeb, and his task was rendered easier by the co-operation of Mir Jumla, whom he had detached from the Qutb Shah. The country was ravaged, but when conquest was almost within reach, Shahjahan intervened and peremptorily commanded Aurangzeb to stop the war. The serious illness of the emperor in September 1657 postponed the Deccan conquest to a subsequent date.

After his accession to the throne Aurangzeb did not pursue a vigorous policy in the Deccan during the first half of his reign. But with the end of the Rajput war in 1681 he felt himself free to turn his attention to the Deccan. He was specially filled with dismay at the junction of Prince Akbar with Shambhuji, the Maratha chieftain, which he described as an alliance between the 'disturber of India' and 'the infernal son of the infernal infidel.' But for this the emperor might have allowed the affairs in the Deccan to take their course. Another motive was furnished by the hostility of the empire to the Shias of the Deccan. To Aurangzeb they were as distasteful as the Hindus, and he spoke of them as 'corpse-eating demons' and 'misbelievers.' War was sanctioned as much by mundane motives as by the desire to obtain religious merit, and Aurangzeb spent the remaining 26 years of his life in the endeavour to crush the Shias and the Marathas. First he directed his arms against Bijapur.[44]

[44] There is one interesting point in connection with Aurangzeb's Deccan policy. Many writers on Indian history have expressed the view that he committed a blunder in destroying the Shia kingdoms, which would have greatly helped him against the Marathas. Sir J. N. Sarkar takes a

What had happened in Bijapur since the abrupt termination of Aurangzeb's campaign in 1657? Ali Adil Shah II was a capable monarch. He died on the 24th November, 1672, and with his death began the era of decline. His son Sikandar who was a mere lad of four years of age was placed on the throne by self-seeking politicians whose intrigues brought about the ruin of the state. The government was carried on by regents who fought amongst themselves and spasmodically waged war against the Mughals and Marathas. Apart from the internecine strife of rival factions, there were certain general causes of decay in the body politic itself. The state was a military despotism which rested on the bayonets of the generals, who acted pretty much like the feudal barons of mediæval Europe. The bureaucracy was selfish and greedy and cared only for personal gain. The common people were indifferent to political revolutions, and were willing to transfer their allegiance to any conqueror who established his right to the throne by his sword. The dissolution of such a decadent state was only a question of time.

Conquest of Bijapur, 1686.

Aurangzeb sent Diler Khan to the Deccan, and he laid siege to Bijapur in 1679, but he failed to capture it. The soldiers in the army mutinied, and openly abused the general who had forfeited all claim to the emperor's goodwill by

different view. He says that an alliance between the Mughals and the Shia rulers of the Deccan was impossible. Since Akbar's day they had never been able to get rid of the notion that the Mughals aimed at the anexation of their kingdoms. He further contends that the national state of the Marathas was already formed, and that Bijapur and Golkunda were in a state of decline, incapable of holding them in check.

Whatever the condition of the Deccan kingdoms, had Aurangzeb used them as bulwarks against the rising power of the Marathas, he would have postponed the evil day for some time at least. The destruction of the kingdoms opened the flood-gates of anarchy in the Deccan.

reason of his failure. Diler Khan was disgraced and recalled in February 1680.

From 1680 to 1683 the Sultan of Bijapur enjoyed an interval of repose. The Mughals were busy with Shambhuji who had resumed his father's policy of raiding the imperial territories. Aurangzeb sent his two sons Muazzam and Azam against Bijapur and Shambhuji, but they could do nothing except capturing a few Maratha forts. On the 13th November, 1683, the emperor arrived at Ahmadnagar to direct the campaign in person. Prince Azam captured Sholapur ; but his attempt to advance on Bijapur was frustrated by the enemy. The emperor also proceeded to Sholapur which he reached on May 24, 1685. The siege of Bijapur had already begun in April.

The situation from the Mughal point of view was not very hopeful. Sikandar's appeal for help met with response from the Qutb Shah and Shambhuji. The siege continued for a long time, but the appearance of famine in his army filled Aurangzeb with despair, and he ordered Prince Azam to retire from Bijapur. But the prince was firm, and told his council of war, which advised retreat that with his Begum and two sons he would stick to the post of duty as long as there was breath in his body. Meanwhile Aurangzeb sent reinforcements, and the siege dragged on for a year. Later he himself proceeded to the neighbourhood of Bijapur to superintend the siege in person. His determination shook the nerves of the Bijapuris, and the shortage of provisions soon decided the issue. They capitulated on September 12, 1686.

Sikandar was brought to the imperial camp, and was duly ushered into the Hall of Public Audience. Even Aurangzeb was touched by the sight of this handsome young prince deprived of all earthly possessions, and reduced to the position of a mere captive. He spoke a few words to console him, seated him on his right, and enrolled him among the grandees

of the empire with an annual pension of a lakh of rupees. Bijapur was annexed to the Mughal empire, and its king, the descendant of a long line of rulers, was reduced to the status of a Khan.

Aurangzeb was vociferously greeted by a host of admirers. A week after the fall of the city he entered it in triumph, offered thanks to God in the Jam-i-Masjid for the victory that had been vouchsafed to him. In the Adil Shahi palace, adorned by the lavish bounty of successive monarchs, high bigotry manifested itself in the destruction of all wall-paintings which were in contravention of the command of the *Shariyat*.

The city was ruined. The loss of independence spelled also the ruin of her culture, for the provincial viceroy whom Aurangzeb appointed simply squeezed money from the people, and remitted it to the imperial headquarters.

Sikandar's fate may be told in a few words. He was imprisoned in the fort of Daulatabad, where he spent many years of his life in a bitter agony of despair in the company of another exalted captive, Abul Hasan, the king of Golkunda. He was afterwards carried about with the imperial camp, and in this wretched condition came the final happy release in April 1700, when he was barely 32 years of age. His death caused profound grief at Bijapur, and 'thousands of women wept, broke their bracelets and performed such other ceremonies as if they had been widowed.'[45]

Ever since the peace made with Aurangzeb in 1656, Abdullah Qutb Shah had ceased to govern, and consequently misrule and anarchy had spread in the country. He had no son, and after his death in 1672 was succeded by Abul Hasan, who was descended from the royal family on his father's side, with the help of self seeking politicians who hoped to find in this

Conquest of Golkunda, 1687.

[45] Bhimsen in Sarkar, IV, p. 329.

imbecile child of fortune a tool for the furtherance of their own ends. Abul Hasan was a pleasure-loving man whose sensuality seemed revolting even to the men of his time. Master of a huge kingdom, rich in resources and the accumulated wealth of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, he gave himself up completely to debauch and resigned the affairs of the kingdom to his Brāhman ministers, Madannā and his brother Akannā, who held the post of Wazir and Commander-in-Chief respectively. This 'fraternising with infidels' was enough to damn him in the eyes of Aurangzeb who was a bigoted Sunni, intolerant of all forms of dissent. Besides, Abul Hasan had given help to that 'helpless orphan,' Sikandar of Bijapur—a fact established by a letter, addressed by the Sultan to his agent in the Mughal camp and intercepted by Mughal officers. Aurangzeb himself described the *casus belli* in a letter to Abul Hasan :

> "The evil deeds of this wicked man pass beyond the bounds of writing, but by mentioning one out of a hundred, and a little out of much, some conception of them may be formed. First, placing the reins of authority and government in the hands of vile tyrannical infidels ; oppressing and afflicting the Saiyids, Shaikhs, and other holy men ; openly giving himself up to excessive debauchery and depravity ; indulging in drunkenness and wickedness night and day ; making no distinction between infidelity and Islam, tyranny and justice, depravity and devotion ; waging obstinate war in defence of infidels ; want of obedience to the Divine commands and prohibitions, especially to that command which forbids assistance to an enemy's country, the disregarding of which had cast a censure upon the Holy Book in the sight both of God and man. Letters full of friendly advice and warning upon these points had been repeatedly written, and had

been sent by the hands of discreet men. No attention had been paid to them ; moreover it had lately become known that a lac of pagodas had been sent to the wicked Sambha. That in this insolence and intoxication and worthlessness no regard had been paid to the infamy of his deeds, and no hope of deliverance in this world or in the next."[46]

From Aurangzeb's point of view there was ample justification for war. The kingdom possessed great natural resources : its rich mines of diamonds and iron, its flourishing ports added to its wealth and excited the cupidity of foreign invaders. The treaty which the Qutb Shah had made with Aurangzeb was not faithfully observed. The war indemnity still remained unpaid, and the annual tribute of two lakhs of *hūns* was in arrears. Besides, the Sultan had appropriated the fruits of Mir Jumla's jagirs in the Karnatik, which really belonged to the Mughal government. But the worst offence of Abul Hasan was the ascendency which he had allowed the Brāhman ministers to acquire in the affairs of the Muslim State of Golkunda.

While the siege of Bijapur was going on, a force under Prince Muazzam styled Shah Alam was sent to Golkunda to prevent the junction of the Qutb Shahi forces with the Bijapuris. But the progress of the Mughals was much hampered by the jealousy of the imperial officers and the supineness of the chief commander, Shah Alam. Aurangzeb brought the Prince to a sense of duty by a 'stinging rebuke,' and the war was renewed with great energy and vigour. Abul Hasan had already fled to Golkunda against the wish of Madannā, who had advised him to betake himself to Warrangal or some other fort. The Prince pressed on and captured Haiderabad on October 8, 1685.

[46] Khwafi Khan, Elliot, VIII, p. 325.

The government of Golkunda fell into complete disorder, and the wrath of the nobles and officers fell upon the devoted head of Madannā. One night (March 1686) he was murdered by certain conspirators in the streets of Golkunda, and his brother too shared the same fate. The death of the infidel minister was a great relief to Aurangzeb, who now left the Golkunda territory and concentrated his forces on Bijapur.

The fall of Bijapur in 1686 left Aurangzeb free to deal with Golkunda. Undaunted as ever, he himself went to Golkunda in January 1687, and ordered the siege of the town. At this time a misunderstanding occurred between the emperor and the prince, who had begun to treat with Abul Hasan without his father's permission, and encouraged him 'to look up to him as his only friend at Court.' The emperor was deeply incensed at this secret parley of the prince and threw him into prison, where he remained for seven years. The siege went on, but the Mughals suffered much from famine, and the enemy inflicted heavy losses upon them. An outbreak of epidemic further added to their sufferings, and destroyed men and beasts by hundreds. Aurangzeb's good luck helped him considerably. Treachery succeeded where courage had failed, and one of Abul Hasan's officers who was bribed, left the postern gate of the fort open, and allowed the Mughals to enter (21st September) without much opposition. But the fortress was not taken without stubborn fight. The last brave struggle between the Mughals and the forlorn hope of Golkunda was brightened by the golden deed of Abdur Razzaq. As the chronicler says, like a drop of water falling into the sea, or an atom of dust struggling in the rays of the sun, he threw himself upon the advancing foe, and fought with inconceivable fury and desperation, shouting that he would fight to the death for Abul Hasan. He spurned the bribes and the proferred honours and dignities with which Aurangzeb tried to seduce him. His heroism astonished even his enemies, and Khwāfi

Khan has graphically described the manner of his valiant fight:

"Abdur Razzak Lari heard this, and, springing on a horse without any saddle, with a sword in one hand and a shield in the other, and accompanied by ten or twelve followers, he rushed to the open gate, through which the imperial forces were pouring in. Although his followers were dispersed, he alone, like a drop of water falling into the sea, or an atom of dust struggling in the rays of the sun, threw himself upon the advancing foe, and fought with inconceivable fury and desperation shouting that he would fight to the death for Abul Hasan. Every step he advanced, thousands of swords were aimed at him, and he received so many wounds from swords and spears that he was covered with wounds from the crown of his head to the nails of his feet. But his time was not yet come, and he fought his way to the gate of the citadel without being brought down. He received twelve wounds upon his face alone, and the skin of his forehead hung down over his eyes and nose. One eye was severely wounded, and the cuts upon his body seemed as numerous as the stars. His horse also was covered with wounds and reeled under his weight, so he gave the reins to the beast, and by great exertion kept his seat. The horse carried him to a garden called Nagina, near the citadel, to the foot of an old cocoanut tree where, by the help of the tree, he threw himself off. On the morning of the second day a party of men belonging to Husaini Beg passed, and recognizing him by his horse and other signs, they took compassion upon him, and carried him upon a bedstead to a house. When his own men heard of this, they came and dressed his wounds."[47]

[47] Elliot, VII, pp. 332-333.

Aurangzeb ordered that two surgeons, one a European and the other a Hindu, should attend on the wounded warrior and report his condition every day. The surgeons reported that they had counted nearly 70 wounds on his person besides many wounds upon wounds which could not be counted. Aurangzeb directed them to cure his wounds, and after sixteen days when the patient opened one of his eyes and muttered a few words, Aurangzeb sent a message to him to send his sons to receive *mansabs* from the emperor. When the message was communicated to that 'devoted and peerless hero,' he expressed his gratefulness but added:

> "If, however, it pleased the Almighty to spare him and give him a second life, it was not likely that he would be fit for service; but should he ever be capable of service, he felt that no one who had eaten the salt of Abul Hasan, and had thriven on his bounty, could enter the service of King Alamgir (Aurangzeb)."

A cloud, writes Khwāfi Khan, passed over the face of the emperor, as he heard these words and he observed, "Let me know when he has completely recovered." Sacrifice like that of Abdur Razzāq was rare in the Mughal camp where an atmosphere of treachery and intrigue prevailed. It made a profound impression upon friends and foes, and the emperor signified his goodwill afterwards by raising him to a *mansab*.

Now there was no hope for Abul Hasan. The epicure in him vanished at the sight of danger, and he prepared to submit to his fate with the resignation and courage of a martyr. He begged leave of his captors to finish his meal and bade them partake of it. Not a harsh word fell from his lips; not a muscle of his face moved; he remained serene and dignified, as if nothing had happened, speaking to the Mughal officers with the greatest gentleness and courtesy. He told them that there was no occasion for grief; for he

"knew how to take pleasure and pain with equal indifference as gifts of God."

Enormous booty was seized, amounting to nearly seven crores of rupees in cash, besides gold, silver, jewels and other articles of value. Golkunda was annexed to the empire (1687), and Abul Hasan was sent as a prisoner to the fort of Daulatabad, and a pension of 50,000 a year was settled on him.

The preliminary engagements against the Marathas in 1682-83 had borne little fruit. The troops in the Konkan had suffered much at the hands of the Marathas. But now that Bijapur and Golkunda had been conquered, Aurangzeb was free to deal with the Marathas. Shivaji's son Shambhu was a brave but voluptuous man, who wasted his time in pleasure when he ought to have exerted himself to take advantage of Aurangzeb's difficulties. Heir to a large kingdom and vast treasure, hoarded by a father who had led many predatory excursions, he gave himself up entirely to debauch and lost that moral grit and sturdy vigour which had led Shivaji to carve out an independent kingdom for himself in the teeth of Muslim opposition. The emperor captured several forts, and Shambhuji took up his abode at Sangameshwara where he thought he would be safe. But he was soon disillusioned, and the imperial general Muqarrab made a surprise attack, and captured Shambhu and his friend Kavi Kulesh and others with their wives and daughters. The prisoners were brought in heavy chains to the imperial camp, where the victory was celebrated in the midst of great rejoicings. Professor J. N. Sarkar describes how they were presented to the emperor:

War with the Marathas renewed.

> "Four miles outside the encampment, Shambhuji and Kavi Kulesh were dressed as buffoons with long fool's caps and bells placed on their heads, mounted on camels, and brought to Bahadurgarh with drums beating and trumpets pealing. Hundreds of thousands of spectators

lined the roads to gaze at Shambhu as at a new kind of wild beast or demon. Thus degraded, the captives were slowly paraded through the entire camp and finally brought to the emperor who was sitting in full durbar for the occasion. At the sight of the prisoners, Aurangzeb descended from his throne and kneeling down on the carpet bowed his head to the ground in double thankfulness to the Giver of this Crowning Victory. After he had looked at them, the captives were removed to prison."[48]

Khwāfi Khan writes that Kavi Kulesh, who was a Hindi poet, on seeing Aurangzeb's devotion, addressed to Shambhu verses to this effect: " O Raja, at the sight of thee the King Alamgir (Aurangzeb), for all his pomp and dignity, cannot keep his seat upon his throne, but has perforce descended from it to do thee honour."[49] According to one authority Aurangzeb sent an officer to ask Shambhu where he had hidden his treasures, and which officers of the emperor had intrigued with him. The Maratha chief abused the emperor and his Prophet, and demanded the hand of Aurangzeb's daughter as the price of his friendship. The purport of the conversation was reported and Aurangzeb took the ominous decision. Shambhu and his companion both were subjected to unspeakable tortures, and then 'their limbs were hacked off one by one, and their flesh was thrown to the dogs' (11th March, 1689).[50] The heads of the culprits, after the fashion of the Mongols of Central Asia in the middle ages, were stuffed with bran, and exposed to public gaze in the chief centres of the Deccan. Such was the inglorious end of the licentious Shambhu who had disgraced his father's memory, and cast

48 History of Aurangzeb, IV, pp. 401-2.

49 Khwafi Khan, Elliot, VII, p. 340.

50 Sarkar, History of Aurangzeb, IV, p. 403.
Storia, II, p. 311.

to the winds the noble principles which had inspired his policy throughout his career.

War was carried on with great vigour against the Marathas, and a number of forts fell into the hands of the Mughals. The imperialists then laid siege to Shambhu's capital Raigarh. Rājā Rām, his brother (a son of Shivaji by another wife), escaped in the disguise of a mendicant, but his and Shambhu's family including the latter's son Shāhu were captured. The women were treated with becoming dignity, and Shāhu was created a *mansabdar* of 7,600. He was kept in custody, although 'suitable teachers were appointed to educate him.' By the end of 1689 Aurangzeb had reached the apogee of power, and none could challenge his claim to sovereignty in the north and the south. But the empire of the sword could not last long, and its dissolution was only a question of time.

The last trial of strength with the Marathas, 1691—1707.

The barbarous execution of Shambhuji and the imprisonment of his son Shāhu in the imperial camp did not crush the spirit of the Marathas, and they renewed their struggle with greater determination than before. In the absence of Shāhu, the government was carried on by Rājā Rām, the younger brother of the great Shivaji. After his escape from Rajgarh, he had betaken himself to Jinji, where he exerted himself vigorously to consolidate his power. His efforts were ably seconded by a band of patriotic Maratha leaders, who had resolved to wrest the Maratha country from the Mughals, and to fight against heavy odds for their national independence. When Rājā Rām sent his military officers to raise their own forces and to exact *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* not only in the six Deccan Subahs, but also in the older Mughal provinces, Aurangzeb's ire was roused, and he felt convinced of the necessity of planning a fresh campaign to uproot the Maratha power. He despatched Zulfiqar Khan, son of Wazir Asad Khan, to lay siege to Jinji. The fort of

Jinji, surrounded by a number of other forts, was well furnished with provisions and munitions of war, and was therefore in a position to defy the besiegers. The Zamindars of the country in the neighbourhood joined the Maratha forces, surrounded the imperial army, and 'showed great audacity in cutting off supplies.' The siege began in 1691, but it was prolonged by the gallant resistance offered by Santaji Ghorpare and Dhanaji Jadhava, who baffled the Mughal attempts to capture the fort. Fighting went on on both sides with unabated vigour without achieving any appreciable measure of success. It was at this time that Prince Kambaksh opened correspondence with Rājā Rām, but the secret leaked out through Zulfiqar's spies, and the prince was at once placed under surveillance. He was taken as a prisoner to the imperial camp, and was presented to the emperor in the *haram* through the intercession of his sister Zinat-un-nissa Begum. There the misguided youth sought to justify his own treason by dwelling upon the treachery and rapacity of Zulfiqar Khan, but the emperor was too experienced in political affairs to credit the story which was a pure fabrication. Zulfiqar and the other generals presevered in their attempt notwithstanding the serious difficulties placed in their way by the nature of the country and the tactics of their enemies, and at last succeeded in capturing the fort of Jinji by escalade in January 1698. Rājā Rām escaped to Satara, but his family was seized and kept in honourable captivity. The treasures and the materials of war found in the fort were captured by the Mughals, and Zulfiqar who had suffered much at the hands of the Marathas, satiated his fury by putting to death many of the officers who had fought against him.

Rājā Rām soon organised a large army at Satara consisting of the veteran troopers, Silahdars and Bargirs of Shivaji's time. One by one the Maratha generals joined him, and with their help he carried predatory excursions into Khandesh, Berar

and Baglana, and levied *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* in those districts.

In 1699 Aurangzeb, intent on the ruin of the Marathas, left Islampuri on the 19th of October in order to direct the campaign in person. He knew well enough the disastrous consequences of the mutual bickerings of his generals, and therefore kept the supreme command in his own hands. He was now eighty-one years of age, but with the undaunted courage of a tried warrior he prepared himself for the arduous duties of the battlefield. The imperialists laid siege to Satara, whither the emperor himself had proceeded and encamped at the village of Karanja, a mile and a half to the north of the fort walls. The siege began in December, and the garrison offered a heroic resistance. The Mughal attempts to take the fort by storm failed, but Rājā Rām's death in March 1700, altered the situation, and damped the ardour of the beleaguered garrison. The Maratha leader made peace with the emperor through the good offices of Prince Azam, and on April 21, the imperial flag was hoisted on the ramparts of the fort of Satara.

Rājā Rām was succeeded by his natural son Karna, but he died of small-pox after a brief reign of three weeks. The dowager-queen Tārābāi then placed on the throne her own son, a legitimate son of Rājā Rām, under the title of Shivaji, and herself assumed the duties of regent. She was a capable and sagacious woman who understood the business of state, and even the hostile Khwāfi Khan admits that she was a "clever, intelligent woman, and had obtained a reputation during her husband's lifetime for her knowledge of civil and military matters."[51] She infused a new vigour into the Maratha affairs, and by her masterful courage kept together the discordant elements in the state. The results of capable

[51] Elliot, VII, p. 367

and efficient organization soon became manifest, and Khwāfi Khan is constrained to observe:

> " She took vigorous measures for ravaging the imperial territory, and sent armies to plunder the six Subahs of the Deccan as far as Sironj, Mandisor, and the Subahs of Malwa. She won the hearts of her officers, and for all the struggles and schemes, the campaigns and sieges of Aurangzeb up to the end of his reign the power of the Marathas increased day by day . . . . They divided all the districts (parganas) among themselves, and following the practice of the imperial rule, they appointed their Subahdars (provincial governors), *Kamaishdars* (revenue collectors) and *rāhdārs* (toll-collectors).[52]

The fall of Satara was a great blow to the Marathas, but they carried on the struggle with the same determination as before. The imperialists captured the forts of Parli (1700), Panhala (1701), Kondana (1701), Khelna (1702), Rajgarh and Torna (1704), some by fighting the enemy in the open field and others by treachery and bribe. These victories did not satisfy Aurangzeb's restless ambition. He now proceeded to lay siege to the fort of Wagingera,[53] which belonged to the Berads, a low caste tribe, who had on a former occasion submitted to the emperor. Their leader Pidia Nayak (Parya Naik in Elliot), finding the Mughals irresistible, fled by a backdoor at night with his companions. They carried their women, children, and treasure with them and set fire to what they had to leave behind. When the Mughals entered the fort, they 'found only disabled and wounded persons, who were unable to fly!'

52 Elliot, VII, p. 374.

53 Twelve miles south-west of Sagar.

The fort was captured (1705), but the victory was wholly disproportionate to the sacrifice of men and money incurred in achieving it. The siege of Wagingera was the last military exploit of Aurangzeb on this side of the grave.

Condition of the Deccan.

Aurangzeb's war in the Deccan, lasting for a quarter of a century, had brought him no permanent advantage. The army was in a wretched condition ; it had endured great misery and privations, and its *morale* had become low on account of failure and want of discipline. The roads were flooded and transport difficulties enormous. The Marathas were dominant throughout the Deccan. They had acquired much wealth by plunder and rendered the highways unsafe. The price of grain had risen, and the imperial camp felt the pinch more than anyone else.

In the Mughal provinces too the Zamindars joined the Marathas, and peace and order came to an end. Some of the village Muqaddams who were encouraged in their designs by the Maratha Subahdars ceased to pay revenue to the Mughal government, and openly defied its authority. The country was completely ravaged, and there was no trace of crops of any kind. Manucci writes that the entire land had become so depopulated that neither fire nor light could be found in the course of a three or four days' journey.[54] The same writer goes on to add : "In the Deccan there was no rain from 1702 to 1704, but instead plague prevailed. In these two years have expired over two millions of souls ; fathers compelled by hunger, offering to sell their children for a quarter to half a rupee, and yet forced to go without food, finding no one to buy them."[55]

[54] Storia do Mogor, IV, p. 252.

[55] Ibid., p. 97.

Thus plague and famine added to the horrors of war, and the sufferings of men and beasts became unendurable, as the huge armies, ill-controlled and ill-disciplined, progressed from one stage to another in quest of the final triumph, which seemed to recede further and further in the distance.

Death of the Emperor.

After the siege of Wagingera the aged emperor retired to Devapur, a village eight miles south of the fort, in order to pass the rainy season. Here he was seized with fever, and though he concealed it as long as he could, fainting fits supervened and he was prevented from appearing in public for ten or twelve days. When he felt a little relieved he broke up the camp at Devapur, and left for Ahmadnagar, where he reached on the 20th January, 1706. The deepening gloom of his last years constitutes one of the most tragic features of his distinguished public career. His sons expressed a wish to attend on him, but the fate of Shahjahan haunted his mind, and he sent them away to their respective charges. Political considerations overbore paternal love, and even from his beloved Kambakhsh the dying emperor parted with a heavy heart, to ensure the young prince's safety against Azam's impatience and ambition. Deprived of that tender nursing and devoted care which reduces half the misery of a patient, when he is surrounded by his own kith and kin, the emperor felt lonely and bitter. but he must pay the penalty of his exalted office. His malady increased, and he was again attacked by a severe fever. For three days he continued to transact the business of the state and performed his prayers as usual. It was in this condition that he was requested to give away an elephant and a valuable diamond in charity to ward off the influence of evil stars. But he replied that it was the practice of the Hindus, and ordered four thousand rupees to be distributed among the poor for the benefit of his soul. On the same letter he wrote: "Carry this creature of dust quickly to the first (burial) place

and consign." He is said to have written a will also, containing the disposition of his wide dominions.[56]

There was no hope of recovery, and all felt that the end was near. On the 20th of February, 1707, the emperor said the morning prayers as usual, and began to count the beads of his rosary, but gradually he became unconscious and expired, indomitable and implacable to the last. His pious wish that he should die on a Friday was granted by a propitious God in whose cause he had unceasingly laboured all his life. He was buried near Daulatabad in the precincts of the tombs of Shaikh Burhanuddin, Shah Zari Zar Bakhsh, and other holy men. Such was the end of the last great emperor of the house of Babar.

The North-West Frontier policy of Aurangzeb.

The tribes that inhabit the North-West Frontier have always been a wild and turbulent race. They have never made any attempt at forming themselves into a nation, and the divisions among various clans have made it impossible for them to combine under a common leader. In the 16th and 17th centuries the Afghans were wilder and more restless than they are to-day, and constantly gave trouble to the government at Delhi. They took to highway robbery as their profession, and organised raids into the territories of

[56] He directed in his will that four rupees and two annas out of the price of the caps sewn by him should be spent on his shroud, and three hundred and five rupees, from the wages of copying the Quran, should be distributed among the poor. The money obtained by copying the Quran was not to be spent on his shroud.

He gave the following advice to his sons:

"Never trust your sons, nor treat them during your lifetime in an intimate manner, because, if the Emperor Shahjahan had not treated Dara Shukoh in this manner, his affairs would not have come to such a sorry pass. Ever keep in view the saying. 'The word of a king is barren.'

their rivals. They did not spare even the Mughal provinces, and often came into collision with the local authorities. The Mughal government sometimes employed military force to crush them, and at other times it had recourse to bribery in order to tame their fierce and lawless spirit.

Akbar was the first to make an attempt to enforce peace on the North-West Frontier. The Mughal commanders suffered heavy losses, but with the help of the Rajputs the emperor succeeded in holding them in check. During the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan the campaign in Qandhar, Balkh, and Badakhshan impressed for a time these irrepressible hillmen with the might and majesty of the empire, but as soon as the authority of the central government became lax towards the close of Shahjahan's reign, they raised their heads again and stirred up strife.

In 1667 one of the leaders of the Yusufzais, Bhagu, brought together some of their clans under his control, crowned one Muhammad Shah as their king, and arrogated to himself the functions of wazir. The rebellion soon assumed formidable proportions. The rebels crossed the Indus, and invaded the Hazara district where they established their sway, and levied rent from the helpless peasantry. The Mughal outposts were attacked, and in the extremity of peril the wardens appealed to the emperor for help.

The emperor sent three of his generals to deal with the situation. After a stubborn fight the Yusufzais were driven into the river, and large numbers of them were wounded and slain. But the imperialists did not stop at this. They pressed on the enemy, and the Mughal generals Kamil Khan, Shamsher, and Muhammad Amin Khan, son of Mir Jumla, ravaged the villages and inflicted heavy losses upon them. The Afghans became quiet for the time being, and Raja Jaswant Singh was deputed by the emperor to command the outpost of Jamrud.

In 1672 occurred the rising of the Afridis under their chief, Acmal Khan, who assumed the title of king, declared war upon the Mughals, and invited the other tribes to join them. The imperial general Muhammad Amin Khan, who was a man of impetuous temper, disregarded the advice of Raja Jaswant Singh and marched against them, but he met with heavy losses, and with difficulty escaped to Peshawar. Ten thousand men of the Mughal army were captured and sent as slaves to Central Asia for sale. The family of Amin was captured, and he had to pay a large ransom for its release. But the proud and noble lady, the wife of Amin, refused to return after this disgrace, and took to a life of asceticism in a local monastery. This victory brought a great advantage to the Afridi leader. His prestige rose high, and many an ardent Afghan youth joined his banner in the hope of obtaining money and military distinction.

Another formidable revolt with which the imperial government had to deal was that of Khush-hal Khan, the chief of the Khatak—a warlike clan inhabiting the country now comprised in the districts of Peshawar, Bannu, and Kohat. He was invited to a *darbar* at Peshawar, and was treacherously arrested by the orders of the Mughal government. He was detained in prison at Delhi and Ranthambhor, and was not reconciled to his captors until 1666 when he and his son both were enrolled in the Mughal army, and were sent to fight against their hereditary enemies, the Yusufzais. But the sight of the Afghan country stirred new hopes and yearnings in Khush-al's heart. He jonied Acmal and himself became one of the leaders of the tribal confederacy which was organised to destroy the power of the Mughals in the Afghan region.

The emperor at once sent Fidai Khan, the governor of Lahore, to Peshawar and Mahabat Khan to Kabul to guard the Mughal territories. Mahabat Khan proved faithless, and began to parley secretly with the enemy. His conduct was

reported to the emperor who in great wrath sent another general, Shujaat Khan, to take his place. He was savagely attacked (1674) by the Afghans, and his army was very nearly destroyed.

Aurangzeb now decided to take the field in person. He himself proceeded to Hasan Abdāl (June 1674) at the head of a large army, accompanied by Aghar Khan, Prince Akbar, Wazir Asad Khan, and several other distinguished generals. Mahabat was removed from his command on account of his treachery. Diplomacy and valour both did their work, and many clans were won over by means of pensions, jagirs and commands in the Mughal Army. Yet fighting went on incessantly with the tribes, and the Mughals suffered heavy losses, but by the end of the year 1675, the strength of the opposition was considerably diminished, and the emperor left for Delhi. The governor of Kabul, Amir Khan, who was appointed in 1678, pacified the country by his policy of conciliation.

The Khatak Chief Khush-hal Khan was still at large, though his son had joined the imperial service. His hostility to the Mughals was rendered more bitter by his recollection of prison-life in Hindustan. The thought of vengeance filled his mind, and he ever kept his pen and sword ready to achieve his end. While other chiefs had accepted or offered to accept the imperial vassalage, he alone held aloft the banner of freedom, and never allowed a craven thought to enter his mind. But our worst enemies are sometimes our own kinsmen, and after years of gallant struggle for freedom, the undaunted warrior, who had mocked at the might of the empire, was betrayed into the hands of Aurangzeb by his own ungrateful son.

The Mughal success in the northern region can in no way be described as brilliant. The hardy mountaineers baffled the tactics of the imperial army, accustomed to fight in open

plains against well-organised forces. The loss in men and money was by no means inconsiderable and at last the emperor had to employ a policy of reconciliation to win over to his side the recalcitrant tribal chiefs. Subsidies were paid and pensions granted to calm down their lawless spirit. The league of Acmal was broken up, and the Afridis made peace with the Mughals. The war caused much trouble and anxiety to Aurangzeb, and taxed his resources to the uttermost. It drained the imperial finances, and weakened the Mughal plans in other parts of India. As Prof. J. N. Sarkar rightly observes, the withdrawal of the best troops from the Deccan left Shivaji free to pursue his aggressive designs and enabled him to sweep across the Deccan country with irresistible force and vigour. The Afghans would have been valuable allies of Aurangzeb in fighting against the Rajputs, but now it was impossible to expect that they would undergo the sufferings of war in a desert country for the sake of one, who had deprived them of their much-loved freedom and reduced them to the status of subordinate vassals.

Aurangzeb and the English.

As has been said before, the English had been allowed certain trade concessions by Jahangir in 1615 at the time of Sir Thomas Roe's visit to his court. A little later in 1616 they sought permission to build a factory at Masulipatam, and in 1639 with the permission of the Raja of Chandragiri built a factory and a fort at Madras, which was afterwards named Fort St. George. Shahjahan, although hostile to the Portuguese, was friendly towards the English, and in 1651 an English factory was set up at Hugli, and certain fresh privileges of trade were conceded. In 1658 all the English factories were placed under Surat, and in 1664 Aurangzeb reduced the import duty on their goods as a reward for the gallant resistance which they offered to Shivaji, when he sacked that town. On the West coast the English position improved, when Charles II made over to the

company in 1668 the islands of Bombay and Salsette, which he had received as part of the dowry of his wife, Catherine of Braganza. By a fresh charter Charles conferred upon the company certain privileges, which advanced its constitutional position, and made it a real power in the land.

The company now began to fortify its possessions and in 1684 the Directors approved of the policy of their factors. In 1685 Shayasta Khan, the governor of Bengal, levied certain local duties from the English, which they resented as contrary to the *farmans* of Shahjahan. War broke out between the English company and the Mughal government. The exponent of this war policy was Sir Josiah Child, the governor of the company, who was anxious to found a large, well-grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come. When the English under Sir John Child, the President of Surat, and brother of Sir Josiah, attacked the Mughal ships on the western coast, the emperor ordered the arrest of all Englishmen and the seizure of all English factories throughout his dominions. The factories at Hugli and Masulipatam were seized, and all trade with the 'audacious foreigners' was forbidden. But since the emperor could ill afford to lose the customs revenue which accrued from trade, he pardoned the English and ordered Ibrahim, the successor of Shayasta Khan in Bengal, to invite Job Charnock, the chief of the English factory at Hugli, to return to his settlement early in October 1690. Charnock came to Bengal and a few miles below Hugli, near the village of Kalikata, he built a small station which afterwards developed into the famous city of Calcutta and the capital of the Indian Empire.

On the west coast also Sir John Child who had begun the war was obliged to sue for peace, and Aurangzeb was pleased to pardon the offences of the English who were allowed to trade as before on payment of 1,50,000 rupees. After the failure of the war-like policy of the two Childs and the amal-

gamation of the two English companies, the English confined themselves to trade, and for nearly half a century abstained from interference in political affairs. Towards the middle of the 18th century they were drawn into the vortex of Indian warfare by the activities of their rivals, and the decline of political authority, consequent upon the break-up of the Mughal empire.

The reaction which began after the death of the Great Akbar reached its high watermark in the reign of Aurangzeb.

Administration under Aurangzeb.

Religious considerations coloured the policy of the state, and the emperor did his best to conform to the orthodox standard. He followed the *Shariyat* in everything, and himself lived all his life like a pious Muslim. His ideal of kingship was very high, and, unlike many other rulers, he devoted his best care and attention to the business of the state. All authority was concentrated in his own hands, and like Louis XIV of France he was his own minister. He looked into the minutest details of administration, and so indefatigable was his industry, that he himself dictated the orders passed on the petitions submitted to him, and despatches that were sent to foreign rulers or his own generals and officers. He could never tolerate a rival authority in the state, and was punctiliously severe in enforcing the royal etiquette. No infringement of the royal prerogative even by his sons was allowed to go unpunished, and nothing displeased the emperor more than the violation of a rule or law which he had made. So strict was he that he often used to say : "If a single rule is disregarded, all the regulations will be destroyed. Though I have not allowed the violation of any rule of the court, men have grown so bold that they request me to set rules aside."[57] Again when he came to know that

[57] Anecdotes, p. 122.

Bahadur Shah performed prayers after setting up canvas screens he wrote :

> " How did he dare do a thing which is the special prerogative of kings? The late Emperor Shahjahan was negligent towards his sons, so that matters came to pass that is notorious."[58]

> " Ibrahim Khan, the governor of Bengal, held court like kings, seated on a couch with the Qazi and other officers sitting humbly on the floor. The emperor ordered the Prime Minister to write to him in a caustic vein that if he was unable to sit on the ground by reason of any disease, he was excused till his restoration to his health, and he should urge his doctors to cure him soon."[59]

Himself hardworking, he exacted hard work from his officials, and indeed throughout his reign the state seemed to be a huge machine of which the main spring was the emperor himself. But as in the case of Philip II of Spain his industry was like that of a clerk or a bureaucrat and not of a statesman, who enunciates principles that grow from age to age and strengthen the roots of kingdoms and empires. The sphere of the authority of the state was widened under him, Like the mediæval European state, he sought to govern the bodies as well as the consciences of his subjects, and gave priority to theological considerations in discharging his secular duties.

The empire was divided into *subahs* as before, but their number was now 21 as the result of the rearrangement of the territorial limits of the older provinces. The extent of the empire was larger than at any time under Mughal rule, and the imperial authority was widely respected. The highest

58 Ibid., p. 58.

59 Ibid., p. 128.

offices of the state continued to function as in Akbar's day, but the principle of appointment was no longer 'Career open to talent.' The theocratic character of the state necessitated the emloyment of Muslims and Hindu renegades irrespective of their fitness for public offices and the results of this pernicious practice were manifest everywhere. The state regulated the private life of the community. The censor of public morals became very active ; he went through the streets demolishing newly-built temples and punishing heresy and other vices condemned in the Holy Book. As an orthodox Sunni, the emperor held the Shias in contempt and called them 'carrion-eating demons.' The Shia officers tried to conceal their faith from him, and on one occasion he was alarmed to find that the paymaster and the two *Nāzims* of Lahore professed the Shia faith. The emperor considered this a sufficient ground for their immediate transfer. The Hindus were excluded from the offices of the state, and the preferential treatment shown to renegades often resulted in the employment of men of inferior talents. The Mughal nobility and officialdom still lived in dread of the Law of Escheat. Bernier writes :

> "The king being the heir of all their possessions no family can long maintain its distinction, but after the Umrah's death is soon extinguished, and the sons or, at least the grandsons, reduced generally to the beggary and compelled to enlist as mere troopers in the cavalry. The king, however, usually bestows a small pension on the widow, and often on the family, and if the Umrah's life be sufficiently prolonged, he may obtain the advancement of his children by royal favour."[60]

This is corroborated by Aurangzeb's own letters. In one of them we come across the following passage :

60 Travels, pp. 211-12.

"Amir Khan (the governor of Afghanistan for 20 years) is dead. I, too, shall die. Write to the Diwan of Lahore to attach the property of the deceased with extreme diligence and effort, so that nothing great or small, not even a blade of grass, may escape. Get information from outside sources and take possession of everything found at any place whatever as this is the rightful due of God's slaves."[61]

There was a regular department of the state called the *Bait-ul-mal,* where the property of all heirless persons was deposited. The escheated property of noblemen was also kept there. The Bait-ul-mal was God's treasury, and the emperor always endeavoured to increase its property. The bulk of the nobles were in debt notwithstanding their *Jagirs,* and did nothing to improve the lot of their peasantry. The bankruptcy of the aristocracy compelled it to reduce its armed strength with the result that lawlessness spread in many places, and the revenue of the state was considerably diminished. Bribery was common, although it was universally condemned. The clerks and accountants in the various departments of the state took bribes to eke out their income, and presents were demanded even by very highly placed officers. The emperor himself sold titles and received Rs. 50,000 from Manohar Dās, Subahdar of Sholapur, for conferring upon him the title of Raja. A purse of Rs. 30,000 was offered to the Wazir by Jai Singh to induce the emperor to retain him in the Deccan command. The lower officials were as corrupt as their higher brethern. They drank hard, held pleasant parties, and made ill-gotten gains, regardless of the injury that they did to the administration. The administration of police and justice received full attention from the emperor. From

61 Ruqqat-i-Alamgiri, Letter 99.

Manucci's account it appears (II, 420-21) that the Kotwal still discharged most of the duties which are mentioned in the *Ain*, and was a busy and active officer. Justice was administered according to the Quranic Law. As in Shahjahan's time Wednesday was reserved for justice, and on that day the emperor went straight from the *Jharokha* to the Hall of Private Audience, and decided cases with the advice of the Qazis, Muftis, scholars, theologians, and the prefect of the city police. Bernier has described Aurangzeb's manner of dispensing justice :

> "All the petitions held up in the crowd assembled in the *Am Kas* (Hall of Public Audience) are brought to the king and read in his hearing, and the person concerned being ordered to approach are examined by the monarch himself, who often redresses on the spot the wrongs of the aggrieved party. On another day of the week he devotes two hours to hear in private the petitions of ten persons selected from the lower orders and presented to the king by a good and rich old man. Nor does he fail to attend the Justice Chamber, called *Adalat Khanah*, on another day of the week attended by the two principal Qazis or chief justice."[62]

Manucci supports Bernier and says that the suitors appeared before the emperor, and laid before him their grievances. He goes on to add :

> "The king ordains with arrogance, and in few words, that the thieves be beheaded, that the governors and *faujdars* compensate the plundered travellers. In some cases he announces that there is no pardon for the transgressor, in others he orders the facts to be investigated and a report made to him."[63]

[62] Travels, p. 263.
[63] Storia do Mogor, II, p. 462.

The Qazis according to Bernier were not invested with sufficient authority to enforce their decrees, and the weak and the injured were left without any refuge whatever and the only law that decided all controversies was the cane and the caprice of a governor.[64] Either the traveller is incorrect or he has generalised from some particular instance. The Qazi's jurisdiction was unquestionably exercised in all cases that could be brought under the Canon law. Probably his statement refers to revenue cases which were disposed of by the governor. Aurangzeb took good care to see that the Qazis did their duty properly. About 1671 when he learnt that the Qazis of Gujarat used to hold court only two days in the week he wrote to the Diwan to order them to sit in their offices for five days in the week from 2 *gharis* after daybreak to a little after midday and go to their houses at the time of Zuhr prayer.

The fiscal system of Aurangzeb was pretty much the same as that of his predecessors. He had abolished a number of cesses at the time of his accession, but had created certain new sources of revenue. The Jeziya was revived, and it brought in a large income to the state. Elaborate regulations were issued for the guidance of his revenue officers which cannot be summarised here for want of space.[65] The actual revenue-collector was the *Krori* who is mentioned in the *Ain* and was assisted by a large staff. The subordinates in the revenue department added to their perquisites by demanding the *Haqq-i-tahrir* from those who had to do business with them. Even the British Government has failed to stamp out this pernicious habit. When the emperor embarked on his Deccan wars the administration in Northern India was neglected. The local *jagirdars* and *faujdars* were ill-equipped to

64 Travels, pp. 235-36.

65 Sarkar, Administration, pp. 197—223.

cope with the high-handed Zamindars who oppressed the peasants, and squeezed money from them with impunity.

There was no change in the working of the provincial administration. Here as at the capital espionage was brisk, and the *Waqianavis* and the *Khufianavis* became more active in sending their reports to the imperial headquarters.

Aurangzeb's ambition to conquer the Deccan led him to build up a huge army. It would be wearisome to repeat all the regulations which he devised for the organization and control of the army. But it may be asserted that, in spite of all this, discipline in the army was lax, if not entirely absent. Bernier who gives a detailed account of the military system of his time says that when once thrown into confusion it was impossible to restore a Mughal army's discipline,[66] while during the march they moved without order, with the irregularity of a herd of animals. Prolonged campaigns in distant lands ending in failure seriously impaired the *morale* of the army. Soldiers and generals carried their wives and concubines with them and enjoyed every kind of luxury that was possible. Military inefficiency was one of the chief causes of the downfall of the empire.

Towards the close of Aurangzeb's reign the administration rapidly declined. The imperial government recklessly offered money to traitors who surrendered the forts of their masters, and the burden ultimately fell on the peasantry. No fort in the Deccan was captured without a bribe, and the huge sums, offered by the emperor, exhausted the wealth of the state. The *faujdars* in the provinces oppressed the people, and no redress could be obtained. Khwāfi Khan relates the story of an old woman who complained of the exactions of a certain *faujdar*. The emperor sent an order that the money of the woman should be returned to her. But after some time she

66 Travels, p. 55.

came again and stated that instead of returning her money the *faujdar* had treated her with greater severity. The emperor issued an order of transfer, but the new *faujdar* proved more exacting and tyrannical. When the old woman appeared again to complain, the emperor angrily retorted, "Go, thou old woman, and pray to God that He may send thee another king." Thus the *faujdars* practised oppression without fear of punishment, and bribed the officers who were sent to warn them of the consequences of their conduct. The pampered Mughal aristocracy lost its moral grit, and the emperor felt himself powerless to chastise the offenders. The Prime Minister's grandson Mirza Tafakkhur used to molest and dishonour the women in the streets as they went to the river, and the emperor could do nothing but to refer the matter to his grandfather. It was only when a Hindu artilleryman's wife was abducted, and his comrades threatened to break out into open mutiny, that the emperor passed an order that the licentious youth should not be permitted to go out of his mansion. The destruction of a state, whose officers played in such a shameless manner with the honour of their subjects, could not be long delayed. Divine retribution followed with the inevitable swiftness of Nemesis.

Aurangzeb is one of the greatest rulers of the Mughal dynasty. As prince in his father's day, he had given ample promise of future greatness, and even Shahjahan was impressed by his ability, daring and political astuteness. His brother Dara feared him as a great rival, and regarded him as a serious obstacle to his accession to the throne. He was endowed with great physical courage, and had given proof of his prowess in many an arduous campaign. As a military general he had established his fame in youth, and never was he more cool and self-possessed than in the heat of battle when he was surrounded by the enemy on all sides. During the Balkh

Character of Aurangzeb.

campaign he astonished friends and foes alike by his presence of mind, when he dismounted his horse on the battlefield against the advice of his friends and comrades to say the *Zuhr* prayers. Great generals and soldiers wondered at his strategical acumen, and admired the care and skill with which he planned and executed a campaign. In diplomacy and statecraft he had few equals, and the most experienced ministers of the Crown feared his power of resolve and respected his judgment. Besides being a distinguished soldier and administrator, he was an accurate scholar. He was well-versed in Muslim theology, and had studied a good deal of ethics, Arabic jurisprudence and Persian literature. The greatest digest of Muslim Law, the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*, was compiled under his patronage. He knew the Quran by heart and made copies of it with his own hand, which he sent to Medina as tokens of his piety and devotion. He was a practised calligraphist, and wrote both *Shikast* and *Nastālīq* with wonderful ease and skill. He wrote and dictated letters and despatches with astonishing facility in Persian, and could compose verses, but he refrained from doing so, because he thought that poets dealt in falsehoods. He had no liking for music and banished it from his court, as we have seen before. His life was simple and austere. He ate little, slept only three hours, and completely abstained from drink. He did not wear gaudy clothes, made a sparing use of jewellery, and kept aside all gold and silver vessels. He regarded the public treasury as a sacred trust, and stitched caps with his own hands to defray his personal expenses. Unlike other kings he was free from lust, and the number of his wives fell short even of the prescribed standard. In his presence nobody could utter falsehood or indulge in improper language. He was so stern and dignified that none ventured to make a jest in his presence, or speak ill of another man. His self-control was remarkable. He listened to the irrelevant details of petitioners with great patience, and treated joys and

sorrows with equal indifference. He cherished a lofty ideal of kingship, and worked like the Puritan, as ever in the great Taskmaster's eye. 'An emperor,' he used to say, 'should never allow himself to be fond of ease and retirement, because the most fatal cause of the decline of kingdoms and the destruction of royal power is his undesirable habit.' He was a great lover of justice, and made no distinction between the rich and the poor, the noble and the commoner. He always reminded his officers to combine gentleness with firmness, an advice which they woefully neglected in actual practice.

Aurangzeb was not a man of strong family affections. His imprisonment of Shahjahan and the murder of his brothers and nephews in some cases in clear violation of his solemn word will ever remain an indelible stain on his memory. He was suspicious of his own sons, and was unhappy as long as they were with him. He kept his eldest son Sultan in prison till his death and disgraced Muazzam, who was kept in prison for eight years for intriguing with the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda. His dearly-loved Kambakhsh also incurred his displeasure during the siege of Jinji, and 'was put under restraint.' Zebunnissa, his daughter, who was a gifted poetess, was confined in the fortress of Salimgarh for sympathising with her rebellious brother Akbar, and remained there till her death in 1702. There in that wretched loneliness she poured out her soul in exquisite melody, the pathos of which still moves the heart. More unsympathetic was his attitude towards those who were not of his own kith and kin. Unforgiving towards his enemies, he was cold and reserved in his dealings with his friends. Generosity in politics was folly to him, as is shown by his treatment of Shivaji and the Rathor Princes. Nor was he always fair and clean in his political methods. He could employ treachery and intrigue without scruple to serve his end, and sometimes his bigotry and narrowmindedness made him forget the most obvious considerations of justice.

He was a man of deep religious convictions. Indeed he was the most orthodox and bigoted ruler of his line. He rigidly followed the *Shariyat* and tabooed everything which is forbidden by it. He was very particular about prayer, fast, *Hajj, Zakat* and *Tauhid* (faith in God)—the five things ordained in Islam. He observed fast during the whole month of Ramzan, and the last ten days he spent in the mosque in the adoration of God. He had a great desire to perform *Hajj*, but he was prevented from fulfilling his wish by the political troubles of his reign. He made amends for this omission by giving every kind of aid to Hajj pilgrims and by sending valuable gifts to the shrines of the Prophet. European writers have spoken of his 'pretended piety' and the successful concealment of his sinister ambition under the cloak of religion. The charge, if at all, is only partially true. It is incredible that the life of a man so pious and devoted should have been a studied lie from top to bottom. The inconsistency between his principles and practice at times created a startling impression, and, no wonder, if many began to look upon him as a hypocrite.

The great qualities of Aurangzeb were neutralised by his proneness to suspicion, his bigoted intolerance, and his implacable vindictiveness. Over-centralisation, espionage, and ruthless repression—all created enemies for him. Personal purity and industry are poor substitutes for broad-minded sympathy and tolerance. There was no human touch in all his dealings. He alienated the Hindus and Shias, and they, in turn, did their best to undermine the foundations of his empire. He lacked statesmanship, and, though a man of deep religious convictions, he knew not the sovereign quality of forgiveness. The change of policy proved fatal to his own interests, and discerning men in his own lifetime perceived the beginning of the end. Towards the close of the 18th century the empire seemed to many a huge engine of

oppression, and ceased to exercise its sway for the benefit of the people who were comprised in it. Khwāfi Khan's praise is not without a note of disappointment. "Of all the sovereigns of the House of Timur—nay, of all the sovereigns of Delhi . . . no one, since Sikander Lodi, has ever been apparently so distinguished for devotion, austerity and justice. In courage, long suffering, and sound judgment he was unrivalled. But from reverence for the injunctions of the law he did not make use of punishment, and without punishment the administration of a country cannot be maintained. Dissensions had arisen among his nobles through rivalry. So every plan and project that he formed came to little good; every enterprise which he undertook was long in execution, and failed of its object."[67]

[67] Elliot, VII, pp. 386-87.

CHAPTER XVII

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN MUGHAL INDIA

The history of India is essentially a history of kings, their wars and conquests, and not of the people. Muslim chroniclers give detailed accounts of court life, battles and sieges, but write nothing about the people, obviously because the latter counted for nothing in their day. Except Abul Fazl no mediæval chronicler has given an exhaustive survey of non-political matters. But some very valuable information can be gleaned about the social and economic condition of the people from the writings of European travellers who visited India in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Absence of social history.

Society in Mughal times was organised on a feudal basis. The king was the apex of the system, and below him were his *mansabdars* or nobles who held high offices in the state. There was little honour or dignity outside the imperial service, and every talented youth aspired to join it. This privileged position of extraordinary respectability created a great divergence in the standard of those who lived at court and those who were away from it. The court was the centre of wealth and culture, whereas away in the country we find modest competence and wretched misery existing side by side.

Feudal Society.

The Mughal nobles who generally followed the example of their patrons were extravagant, and lived luxurious lives. They kept large establishments, which absorbed all the income they earned. Besides their own unusually heavy expenditure, they had to make presents to the court, which impoverished even

The Mughal nobility.

the wealthiest among them. They made a lavish use of imported goods, which resulted in stimulating foreign trade. Drink was a common evil, but it was confined only to the upper classes. In fact many a man of high station died of intemperance. All the Mughal emperors indulged in liquor more or less with the exception of Aurangzeb who was a total abstainer. The *harams* were a common feature of the time. Akbar himself maintained a *seraglio* in which there were 5,000 women, and it had a separate staff of women-officers who looked after its management.[1] The nobles followed the king's example and spent lavishly on mistresses and dancing girls. Dinners were sumptuous, and dainty dishes were provided, as is shown by the description of the dinner given by Asaf Khan to Sir Thomas Roe. Meat was a common article of food, but the cow was respected, and *Ain* 66 (Blochmann, pp. 148-49) says that it is held in great reverence, 'because by means of this animal tillage is carried on, the sustenance of life rendered possible, and the table of the inhabitants is filled with milk and butter.' Fresh fruits were brought from Bokhara and Samarqand, and ice was also used. It is stated in *Ain* 22 (I, p. 56) that all ranks used ice in summer; and the nobles used it throughout the year. The ordinary rate at which it was sold was ten *dams* a *seer*, which means that it was luxury. The magnificence of the court compelled the use of costly dress and jewellery, and Abul Fazl informs us that 1,000 complete suits of precious stuff were made up for his Majesty every year. Most of them were distributed among the persons who paid a visit to the court. The nobles did likewise, and we learn that Abul Fazl at the end of the year gave away all his clothes except his trousers which were burnt. There were many kinds of sports and amusements in which

1 Blochmann, Ain-i-Akbari, I. Ain 15, pp. 44-45.

the nobles took part. Gambling was not prohibited, and in certain cases the amount of bets was limited by regulation, but it is not known how far it was enforced. The houses were palatial, and sumptuously decorated. The fear of the law of escheat forbade economy, and those who hoarded money spent it on personal comforts or in giving large *dowries* like Raja Bhagwan Dās. No officer or nobleman was permitted to take his accumulated hoard out of the country to his home in Persia or elsewhere. Thus the income of the aristocracy was spent as quickly as it was acquired.

The middle classes.

The life of the middle classes was free from ostentation. The lesser officials of the court lived according to the standard which was determined by the nature of the work they had to do. It is impossible to ascertain their salaries, but this much is clear that their circumstances were not easy or prosperous. The chroniclers who generally belonged to the middle classes found life hard, as is evidenced by their observations regarding the prices of food under different dynasties. As Mr. Moreland suggests, the way in which they write about this indicates that the subject was vital to them. The subordinates in the lower grades felt no pinch, and judging from the fact that they passed their days merrily during the last years of Aurangzeb's reign, when there was widespread economic distress in the country, the conclusion may be hazarded that their life was tolerably comfortable. The merchants concealed their wealth lest they should be deprived of it by the local governor or *faujdar*. They lived highly frugal lives, and Terry noticed that it was not safe for them to appear as rich lest they should be used as filled sponges. Bernier also observed that whatever the profits of trade, the commercial classes lived in a state of 'studied indigence.' There were, however, merchants on the West Coast, who did business on a large scale, and enjoyed their riches without fear of losing them. They

maintained a higher standard of living, and made a greater use of luxuries—a fact noted by several European travellers.

The life of the lower classes was hard in comparison with that of the classes above them. Their clothing was scanty ; woollen garments were not used at all and shoes were not much in evidence in certain parts of India. But there was no scarcity of food except in times of famine and consequently no starvation under normal conditions. There is no evidence that the peasantry in Akbar's day lived a hard and pinched life. The state demand was fixed, and the highest officers of the Crown were actuated by the most benevolent intentions. Among the Hindus *Sati* and child-marriage still prevailed. Jewellery and metallic ornaments were worn both by Hindus and Muslims. Restriction against liquor, opium and other drugs does not seem to have been rigorously enforced. Akbar was interested in learning but there was no scheme of popular education. A new curriculum was suggested by the emperor but nothing worth mention was done.

The lower classes.

About the condition in Jahangir's time much information is obtained from the *Remonstrantie* of Pelsaert and De Laet's *Description of India,* which contain the accounts of eye-witnesses. The nobles were well off, and their luxury was beyond description, as was that of the court. De Laet is right in saying that their one concern in life was to secure a surfeit of every kind of pleasure, a judgment which may be compared with Roe's dictum, that they are nothing but voluptuousness and wealth confusedly intermingled. From Pelsaert's account we learn that there were three classes of people whose status was little removed from slavery. These were the workmen, peons or servants, and shopkeepers.

Foreigners on social life.

The workmen were not paid adequate wages. Their services were not voluntary. They were seized by force, and

made to work in the house of a noble or officer, who paid them what he liked. They took only one meal a day, and this consisted of *khichri, i.e.*, rice mixed with pulse with a little butter, and only once a day. Their houses were built of mud with thatched roofs, and there was scarcely any furniture in them. The number of servants was larger, because the wages were low. When they were attached to a powerful officer, they oppressed the innocent and "sinned on the strength of their master's greatness." Honesty was rare among them, and they demanded *dasturi* to supplement their insufficient wages. The shopkeepers concealed their wealth, because informers "swarmed like flies round the governors, and gave false information." They had to suffer much loss, as they had to supply goods to the king and his officers at less than the market rates. The Hindus were clever businessmen, but the Muslims scarcely practised any crafts except dyeing and weaving.

The Hindus believed in the sanctity of the Ganges, and went sometimes 500 or 600 *koses* to have a dip in the sacred waters. Child-marriage was prevalent, and Della Valle makes mention of the marriage of two boys, who had to be held up by grown-up men on horseback.[2] Belief in astrology was common to both Hindus and Muslims. The Brāhmans had much influence with the latter, who never undertook a journey without enquiring about the auspicious date and hour. The Muslims worshipped a number of Pirs and Prophets, and on the occasion of Id, it appears, the cow was not sacrificed, for we are told, "On that day (Id) everyone who is able will sacrifice a goat in his house, and keep the day as a great festival."[3] The hatred between the Shias and Sunnis was as great as ever, and they called each other Kafirs.

2 Travels, p. 31.

3 Pelsaert, p. 74.

Shahjahan's reign was a peaceful and prosperous one. His magnificent tastes afforded ample occupation to the working classes, and brought them good wages for a number of years. But towards the close of his reign, the condition of the people became worse. The peasants were badly treated by provincial governors, and arts and crafts were in a state of decline. The highways were unsafe in certain parts of the country, and Tavernier writes that whoever wishes to travel in India, whether by carriage or palanquin, ought to take with him 20 or 30 armed men with bows, arrows and muskets.[4] Beggary was widely prevalent, and he says that there were in India 800,000 Muhammadan Faqirs and 1,200,000 Hindu mendicants—figures which it is impossible to verify.[5] Like Terry, Della Valle, and others, Tavernier praises the Hindus as a thrifty, sober and honest people and says: "Hindus are morally well. When married, they are rarely unfaithful to their wives; adultery is rare among them, and one never hears unnatural crimes spoken of."

Social decline.

During Aurangzeb's reign the condition of the people steadily declined. The author of the *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* who wrote his history in 1690 A.D. paints a rosy picture of the condition of the empire, but his observations are in conflict with those of European travellers. Of course, he cannot be expected to criticise the government of Aurangzeb under which he lived. But about certain matttrs of trade he supplies valuable information. The bankers of this country are so honest, he says, that even strangers deposit lakhs of rupees with them without any document or witness, and the money is immediately returned on demand. The *hundis* which they issue are honoured all

[4] Travels, I, p. 46.

[5] Tavernier, 392.

over the country, and can be cashed anywhere after paying a little discount. Merchants deposit their goods with them owing to the insecurity of roads, and receive them at their destination without any injury or damage, and this practice is called *bīmā* or insurance.[6]

Society had greatly deteriorated under Aurangzeb, although the *Khulasat* is silent on the subject. The Mughal aristocracy had lost its moral stamina, and there was no hope of its turning over a new lease of life. The sons of the nobility were brought up in the company of women and eunuchs, and imbibed their degrading vices. Pederasty, so common among the Mughals of Central Asia, corrupted Muslim society, and Aurangzeb's *Muhatsibs* could do nothing to stop the evil. Both Hindus and Muslims believed in astrology, and worshipped Saints and Faqirs. Human beings were sacrificed to ensure the success of experiments in alchemy, and sorcery and witchcraft were still held to be potent instruments of good or evil. Originality and intellectual vigour were unknown to the pampered minions of the court, who wasted money like water on pleasures, but did nothing for the education or enlightenment of the people. Slavery still existed, and eunuchs were freely made and sold. The standard of public morality was not high, and the lesser officials accepted bribes without shame or scruple. But from this corruption we turn with great relief to the life of the masses who were free from the vices which had eaten into the vitals of the Mughal aristocracy, at one time capable of producing men who would have made their mark in any age or clime as statesmen and generals. The Hindus were lifted up by a new moral and religious fervour, while the Muhammadans gathered at the tombs of saints and offered worship. The Indian society in North India in 1707 was in

[6] Khulasat, Delhi tdition, p. 25

the process of dissolution, and its decrepit character was clearly revealed during the invasions of the Persians and Marathas.

Economic condition before Akbar.

We know very little about the economic condition of the people during the reigns of Babar and Humayun. Babar has given a description of the people of India in his Memoirs, but it is far from accurate. There is a passing mention in Gulbadan Begam's *Humayunamah* of the cheap prices that prevailed in Hindustan, and we are told that at Umarkot, where Akbar was born, four goats could be had for one rupee. When Sher Shah became emperor of Hindustan, he abolished the old mediæval currency, and issued a copper coin called *dam*. The *dam* varied in weight between 311 grains and 322 grains. He abolished all the internal customs, and levied duties only at the frontier and the place of sale within the empire. After Sher Shah's death great changes took place in the economic condition of the people, and we get a glimpse of these in the *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl.

Currency, Wages, Prices, Weights and Measures.

The *dam*, paisa, or *fūlūs* was continued. It was a copper coin which weighed 5 *tanks* or 1 *tola*, 8 *māshās*, and 7 *surkhs*, and was the 40th part of the rupee. A rupee (of silver) was 11½ *māshās* in weight, and was first introduced by Sher Shah. The *dam* was the coin generally used by the people, and the revenue of the empire down to the days of Aurangzeb was calculated in *dams*. The wages were low. An unskilled labourer usually earned 2 *dams* or 1/20th of a rupee per day whereas a highly skilled labourer (say a carpenter) was paid 7 *dams* or about 3 annas a day in terms of modern money. These low wages enabled the workmen to live because the prices were very low.

Abul Fazl has given an exhaustive list of prices which is too large to be reproduced here. The prices of some of the

most important articles are given below to enable the reader to form an idea of the cheapness that prevailed in Akbar's time.

Article	Price per man in dam.s	Article.	Price per man in dams.
Wheat ...	12	Wheat flour ...	22
Barley ...	8	Coarse flour ...	15
Gram ...	16½	Barley-flour ...	11
Jwar ...	10	Ghee ...	105
Best rice ...	110	Oil ...	80
Worst rice ...	20	Milk ...	25
Mash ...	16	Curd ...	18
Moth ...	12	Refined sugar ...	6 per *sir*
Millet ...	8	White sugar-candy	5¼ ,, ,,
Mung ...	18	White sugar ...	128 ,, *man*
		Brown sugar ...	55

The vegetables sold very cheaply, and so did the living animals. A Hindustani sheep could be had for Re. 1-8 and a cow in the province of Delhi for Rs. 10. Mutton was sold at 65 *dams* per *man*.

Akbar's *man* was equal to 55½ pounds or nearly two thirds of the present *man* of 82 pounds. The modern *sir* is a little more than 2 pounds in weight, whereas the *sir* of Akbar

was slightly more than two-thirds of 2 pounds. The value of the rupee in English money was generally 2s. 4d.

From these prices it is clear that in the capital and its neighbourhood a rupee could purchase ten times more of grain than it does at the present day in northern India.

Mr. Moreland and Dr. Vincent Smith both admit that the ordinary labourer in Akbar's day had more to eat than he has now, and was happier than his compatriot to-day. In our times, while the price of grain has considerably gone up, ghee and milk have become so scarce as to be entirely beyond the means of ordinary people.

There was not much alteration in the currency after Akbar's death. The rupee contained 175 grains of silver and was equal to 2s. 6d. or 2s. 3d. in English money. The rupee was worth 40 *dams* up to 1616, and from 1627 onwards its value was 30 *dams* or a little more or less. There were rupees of several denominations and weights, but the *chalānī* (current) was accepted as the standard coin. The rupees were of pure metal—a fact noted by all foreign travellers. The *man* was still equal to 40 *sirs*, but the *sirs* differed. Akbar's *sir* weighed 30 *dams*, Jahangir's 36 and Shahjahan's 40.

Famines.

Famines were more frequent than they are now, and caused much suffering to the population. A famine broke out in the neighbourhood of Agra and Biyana in 1555-56, of which Badaoni has given an account. "Men ate their own kind." Writes the historian, "and the appearance of the famished sufferers was so hideous that one could scarcely look upon them. The whole country was a desert." In 1573-74 a serious famine occurred in Gujarat, and was followed by a pestilence. Prices rose high, and the people suffered grievously. There was a famine again which lasted for four years from 1595 till 1598. "Men ate their own kind, and streets were blocked up with dead bodies and no assistance could be rendered for the removal." Epi-

demics and floods added to the misery of the population. Akbar was the first ruler to start relief measures in famine-stricken areas, and an officer was appointed by him for this purpose. But the succour afforded by the state was hardly commensurate with the widespread misery that prevailed in the country.

No serious famine is recorded in Jahangir's reign, although there is mention of deficiency of rain at times. A terrible epidemic called *wabā* (bubonic plague) broke out in Northern India in 1616, and swept away large numbers of men. In 1630, during the reign of Shahjahan, a terrible famine broke out in the central parts of India. An account of this famine and the relief measures of Shahjahan has been given in a previous chapter. The effect of the famine on trade was disastrous. Indigo, the principal article of export, became scarce, and arrangements were made to buy it at Agra instead of Ahmadabad. The price of cotton cloth went up, and that of gold and other imports fell. The yield of indigo in Gujarat was considerably reduced, and all business came to a standstill. Roads were infested with robbers, and it was difficult to send goods from one place to another.

From 1635 to 1643 famine raged in different parts of India intermittently, and scarcity was felt by the people. But in 1645-46 there was an intense famine on the southern section of the Coromandel Coast. The distress was so severe that the people offered themselves as slaves to any one who gave them food to eat. The rains failed again in 1646 and great misery prevailed on the Madras coast. In 1650 the Surat factors reported deficiency of rain in all parts of India and the consequent deficiency of rain in all parts of India and the consequent rise in prices. Again in 1658 the prices of provision doubled in Surat, and large numbers of men were swept away by famine and disease. Distress in Sindh was acute, and grain was sent by the Surat factors to Lahori

Bandar to be distributed among the famished weavers and artisans. A year later scarcity was experienced in the Deccan again, and in Gujarat prices rose very high in 1660, while Sindh was still in the throes of a dire famine. Writing of the year 1659 Khwāfi Khan says that want of rain combined with war and movements of armies made grain very dear, and many districts became entirely desolate. No serious famine like that of 1630-31 broke out during Aurangzeb's reign, but his perpetual wars caused much distress, and resulted in the bankruptcy of his government and the impoverishment of the people. Cultivation was neglected ; industries died out, and thousands of men were reduced to a state of destitution and misery.

Trade, Manufacture and Agriculture.

The state encouraged production in its *kārkhānās*, where valuable kinds of stuff were prepared. Abul Fazl writes that His Majesty paid much attention to various kinds of stuffs, and employed skilful masters and workmen to teach people an improved system of manufacture. The imperial workshops at Lahore, Agra, Fatehur, and Ahmadabad turned out excellent work. The result of this was improvement in taste and the high quality of production. Cloth was also manufactured privately, as, for instance, shawls at Lahore, carpets at Fatehpur Sikri, and cotton cloth in Gujarat and Burhanpur, and Dacca was famous for its delicate fabrics. India imported articles of luxury from foreign countries such as porcelain of high quality from China. The customs duties were not high, and this afforded a great encouragement to foreign traders. But merchants were forbidden to carry bullion out of the country. The principal exports of India were indigo and wool. Akbar did much to encourage cultivation, and under the direction of Raja Todarmal much waste land was reclaimed. Tobacco was introduced either late in 1604 or early in 1605. Akbar himself made an experiment in

smoking tobacco against the advice of his physician, but he never adopted it. After this tobacco began to be cultivated and sold in India and more and more people gradually took to it.

The *kārkhānās*, of which mention has been made before, continued to function down to the days of Aurangzeb. In the 17th century Bernier saw many of them in which artisans of all kinds did work for the state. The governors of provinces, following the example of the court, patronised local products, as they had to supply the emperor with the choicest articles produced in their charges. But at the capital, says Bernier, the artisans and manufacturers were not treated well. The Amirs, like the lesser officials to-day, wanted everything at a cheap rate, and seldom rewarded labour adequately. Under such circumstances the artist had no inducement to produce the best thing he could. The only artists who attained to eminence in their craft were those who were in the pay of the emperor or some wealthy nobleman.

The bankruptcy and decline of the administration during Aurangzeb's reign spelled the ruin of arts and crafts and agriculture. The peasant's prosperity in India is the foundation of the prosperity of the other classes of the population, but the peasant suffered most from the chronic wars and military marches, which did a great injury to his crops. Public peace and security of highways are necessary for trade, but these were disturbed by wars and rebellions. In the Deccan the depression in trade was most severe. Village industries died out altogether, and the industrial classes suffered miserably. Bernier dwells at length upon the decline of arts and crafts and the unsettled condition of the country, which was inimical to all trade and commerce. Prof J. N. Sarkar rightly observes: "Thus ensued a great economic impoverishment of India—not only a decrease of the 'National stock,' but also a rapid lowering of mechanical skill and

standard of civilisation, a disappearance of art and culture over wide tracts of the country."[7]

Mughal architecture.

The Mughals were great builders. The buildings which they erected in all parts of the country bear testimony to their magnificent architectural tastes. Fergusson's theory of the foreign origin of the Mughal style of architecture has been criticised by Havell who maintains that India had connection with foreign countries from time immemorial, and that Indian culture had a peculiar power of absorbing foreign elements. The art and culture of these countries had their influence upon the art of India, but it cannot be said that the inspiration of Indian master-builders was wholly foreign. This fusion of cultures was greatly helped by the Mughal emperors who were more Indian than foreign. We cannot, however, fix upon any style and say 'this is Mughal style.' In fact, as Sir John Marshall says, in a country so vast and diversified as India, it cannot be said that architecture ever conformed to a single universal type. Much depended upon the personal tastes of the emperors. After Babar, Persian influence on Indian art increased and continued to the end of Akbar's reign. Humayun liked the Persian style, and his son Akbar was influenced by Persian ideals, although his genius adapted them to the Indian craft tradition. In the hands of Akbar's successors, Indian architecture and painting became essentially Indian in character, and in the exquisite creations of their reigns we find nothing that is distinctly Persian. The Mughal style, which was an amalgam of many influences, was more sumptuous and decorative than the style that preceded it, and its delicacy and ornamentation furnish a striking contrast to the massiveness and simplicity of the art of pre-Mughal days.

[7] History of Aurangzeb, V, p. 445.

Babar did not feel satisfied with the buildings he found at Delhi and Agra, though he admired the buildings he saw at Gwalior. He had a poor opinion of Indian art and skill, and imported the pupils of Sinān, the famous architect from Constantinople, to construct his buildings. In his *Memoirs* he writes: "In Agra alone, and of the stone-cutters belonging to that place only, I every day employed on my palaces 680 persons; and in Agra, Sikri, Biyana, Dholpur, Gwalior, and Koil, there were every day employed on my works 1,491 stone-cutters." Most of Babar's buildings have perished, but two have survived to this day. These are the large mosque in the Kabul Bagh at Panipat and the Jam-i-Masjid at Sambhal. Humayun's life was spent in great anxiety and trouble, and he found little time to indulge his artistic fancy. A mosque of his time is still seen at Fatehabad in the Hisar district in the Punjab, and is decorated in the Persian style with enamelled tiles. The Surs who snatched power from Humayun's feeble hands were great builders. Besides the mighty forts in the Punjab, Rohtas, and Mankot, they have left us some of the finest specimens of mediæval architecture. The two most remarkable buildings of Sher Shah's time are the mosque in the Qila Kohna or Purana Qila near Delhi and the tomb of the mighty monarch at Sāsaram. The mosque reflects Persian influence in its recessed portal, small minarets round the dome, and in its fine masonry, though in other respects it is Indian. The tomb is "one of the best designed and most beautiful buildings in India unequalled among the earlier buildings in the northern provinces for grandeur and dignity . . ." It is situated on a terrace 30 feet high and about 3,000 square in the middle of a tank, and produces a picturesque impression.

Akbar took a keen interest in buildings, and according to Abul Fazl 'he was a great friend of good order and propriety in business,' and kept control over the price of buidling materials, the wages of craftsmen, and collected data for



Tomb of Humayun

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framing proper estimates. His spirit of tolerance guided all his actions, and during his reign Persian and Hindu influences had their full play. The Hindu style was favoured as is shown by his palace in the Agra fort commonly called the Jahangiri Mahal. The earliest building of Akbar's reign is Humayun's tomb which was completed in 1565. It is more Persian than Indian in design, and its principal novelty consists in its four towers at the four angles of the main building and the narrow-necked dome—features which reached their high watermark during Shahjahan's reign. It is different from the Persian style in that it has no coloured tiles, and marble has been freely used in it. The art of stone inlay in this building indicates a type of decoration which found its fullest development in the reign of Shahjahan.

The most important buildings of Akbar's reign are his palaces at Fatehpur Sikri. In 1569, on his return from Ranthambhor, the emperor laid the foundations of his new city on the summit of a hill near Sikri in honour of Shaikh Salim Shishti. Numerous buildings were constructed in the new city during the years 1569—71. The influence of the Hindu art is clearly reflected in these buildings, and there is ample internal evidence of the part played by Hindu master-builders in their construction. The most impressive buildings of Fatehpur Sikri are the Jam-i-Masjid and the Buland Darwaza, the latter being one of the most perfect architectural achievements in the whole of India. Its total height from the road is 176 feet, and it is still the highest gateway in India, and one of the biggest in the world. It was constructed in 1602 to commemorate the emperor's conquests in the Deccan. The mosque has rightly been described as ' the glory of Fatehpur,' scarcely surpassed by any in India. It is, as an inscription says, ' a duplicate of the Holy place,' but except in its general design it is ' perfectly original.' It was built in 1571, and it was in the quadrangle facing this mosque that the emperor read the famous *Khutba*

to which allusion has been made before. The other interesting buildings of Fatehpur are Birbal's house, the Sonhla Makān or the house of the Princess of Amber, the palace of the Turkish Sultana, the Khwabgah, the Diwan-i-Khas with its beautiful pillar and four galleries, which has been identified by some writers with the historic *Ibādat Khanah*. They are small in size, but it is impossible to conceive anything so picturesque in outline or any building carved or ornamented to such an extent with the smallest approach to being overdone. Equally interesting are the buildings used for offices and courts, though from the architectural point of view they are inferior to the buildings already described. Everything considered, Fatehpur is, to use Dr. Vincent Smith's phrase, a romance in stone, inconceivable and impossible at any other time or in any other circumstances. Shaikh Salim Chishti's tomb is one of the most elegant shrines in India.

But the most characteristic of Akbar's buildings is the tomb at Sikandara, which is unique among the sepulchres of Asia. Its construction was begun by the emperor himself, but it was completed by Jahangir, who says in his *Memoirs* that in 1608 he saw the work in progress, and was so dissatisfied that he caused it to be demolished and reconstructed at a cost of 15 lakhs of rupees. This seems to be a modest estimate far short of the actual amount of expenditure. The tomb is built after the model of Buddhist Vihāras ; the five square terraces emerging from the ground, rise one upon the other, diminishing as they ascend upwards. Originally a marble dome with a golden ceiling was intended to crown the uppermost storey, and if this had been done, the tomb of the greatest Muslim emperor of Hindustan would have ranked among the greatest mausoleums of the world, second only to the Taj. But even without the dome it is a monument worthy of the man whose remains are enshrined in it. A close study of Akbar's buildings justifies Abul Fazl's observation that "His Majesty plans splendid

edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garments of stone and clay."

Akbar adorned his capital Agra by erecting a number of buildings. The foundations of the Agra Fort were laid in 1564 and it was completed in eight years. Inside the fort are the Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-Khas, and the palace commonly called the Jahangiri Mahal.

Jahangir's tastes were different from those of his father. He showed a greater love for painting than for architecture, and did not care even to complete the tomb of his father by giving it a dome. But the gifted empress, Nurjahan, made up to some extent the neglect on her husband's part. She erected a noble tomb known as the Itmad-ud-dowlah in the memory of her father, which was finished towards the end of Jahangir's reign. It is wholly built of marble and possesses rare beauty in spite of its unsatisfactory architectural design. In one respect, however, it is unique. It is one of the earliest buildings in which the *pietra dura* is employed. The art of 'inlay' and 'overlay' is found in the buildings of Akbar's times as in Chishti's tomb at Fatehpur, but was superseded by the introduction of the *pietra dura,* that is to say, inlaying of precious stones of different colour in a most delicate manner. Some writers say that it was introduced in India by the Florentines, but there is no evidence to support this view.

Another important building is Jahangir's tomb on the opposite bank of the Ravi, three miles north-west of Lahore, built by Nurjahan. Jahangir, who was a lover of nature, had willed that his tomb should be erected in the open air so that the rain and dew of heaven might fall on it, but Shahjahan built a mausoleum at a cost of ten lakhs of rupees, which is one of the finest buildings in Lahore. The tombs of Jahangir, Nurjahan, and Asaf Khan suffered much damage at the hands of the Sikhs. The marble was removed by Ranjit Singh who used it in his own buildings.

The most magnificent builder among the Mughals was Shahjahan whose buildings have been described before. He carried the decorative art to perfection, and made an extensive use of marble and the *pietra dura* which characterised the buildings of Nurjahan. The arts of the jeweller and painter were successfully blended into unity.

The chief buildings of Shahjahan's time are the Diwan-i-Am and Diwan-i-Khas in the fort of Delhi, the Jam-i-Masjid, the Moti Masjid, the Taj, and a number of minor buildings in various parts of the empire. The palace of Delhi is the most magnificent in the East or perhaps in the world. The Diwan-i-Khas is more highly ornamented than any building of Shahjahan, and nothing can exceed the beauty of the inlay of precious stones with which it is adorned or the general poetry of the design. Rightly was it regarded by Shahjahan as a 'paradise on earth.' Shahjahan's mosques represent two different types. The beauty of the Moti Masjid or pearl mosque lies in its purity and simplicity. It has none of the magnificence or rich ornamentation usually associated with the gorgeous buildings of Shahjahan. Nevertheless the perfection of proportions and the harmony of constructive designs make it one of the purest and most elegant buildings of its class to be found anywhere. The Jam-i-Masjid is more impressive and pleasing than the Moti Masjid. It was designed 'to attract the eye of the faithful from afar and proclaim the glory of Islam.' This is true. But the interior of the Delhi mosque, unlike the interior of the pearl mosque, is austere and simple. Its designers probably intended it to be so 'lest the fineness of art should disturb the people assembled to pray.'

The most important building of Shahjahan's time is the Taj, the mausoleum which he erected to the memory of his dear wife, Arjumand Bānū. The Begum died in 1630, and the following year the construction was commenced. Eminent artists were invited from Persia, Arabia, Turkey, and the

various parts of the empire to assist in the execution of the plan. Numerous plans were submitted, ideas suggested and criticised, and after a pretty long discussion among experts, there emerged a plan which was finally embodied in marble. At first a model in wood was prepared, which was followed by architects. The master-architect under whose guidance the work was done was Ustād Īsā, who was paid a salary of Rs. 1,000 per month. On the authority of a statement made by Father Manrique of Spain who visited Agra in 1641 it has been suggested that the designer of the Taj was a certain Venetian Geronimo Veroneo. It is quite possible that Shahjahan who was anxious to utilise the services of the best architects he could find might have given the Italian artist also an opportunity to make his suggestions, just as he had probably utilised the services of Austin de Bordeaux, a French goldsmith, in preparing the peacock throne and the silver domes of the Taj. But the view that the designer of the Taj was a foreigner is unacceptable. Father Manrique's information cannot have been obtained directly from Veroneo, who had died at Lahore on the 2nd of August, 1640, before the arrival of the monkish traveller (24th December, 1640—January, 1641). No other European writer makes mention of any foreigner being the designer of the Taj. Peter Mundy who knew Veroneo and saw him at Agra says nothing about his taking part in the building. Tavernier who visited India, while the Taj was being built, makes no mention of any foreign designer, nor does Bernier say a word to suggest that the design was originally made by an Italian. They would have surely given credit to a European if the Taj had been designed by him. Besides these another Frenchman Thevenot who visited the Taj in 1666 writes: "This superb monument is sufficient to show that the Indians are not ignorant of architecture, and though the style may appear curious to Europeans, it is good taste and one can only say that it is very fine."

No Indian historian has made the slightest allusion to an Italian having assisted in the preparation of the plan. The *Padshahnamah* of Abdul Hamid Lahori says:

> "It may be observed that bands of sculptors, lapidaries, inlayers and fresco-makers came from the different parts of his Majesty's dominions. The experts of each art together with their assistants busied themselves in the task."[8]

The internal evidence of the building itself disproves the theory of foreign origin. The unity of the design, the artistic synthesis of execution, the unquestionably Asiatic style and the existence of like decorations in the tombs of Humayun and Itmad-ud-dowlah all go to prove that there was little or no European influence. In fact there is more of Persian influence than European. The mosaic work in the Taj was executed largely by Indian craftsmen under the superintendence of Ustād Īsā and his son Muhammad Sharif. Havell observes in this connection that there is no evidence worthy of consideration to support the common Anglo-Indian belief that Veroneo designed the Taj or superintended the *pietra dura*, which is entirely of the Persian school. The total cost of the building is estimated at three crores. It was completed in 22 years.[9]

The emperor set apart landed property yielding an income of one lakh a year for the maintenance of the mausoleum. The endowment consisted of 30 villages, and the income from these was supplemented by an equal amount of receipts from the rents of shops, bazars, and inns.

[8] Padshahnamah, Elliot, Vol. II, p. 323.

[9] As to the cost of the monument Abdul Hamid Lahori writes (II, p. 330) :—"The cost of building the several edifices which are detailed above, and which were completed in nearly 12 years under the supervision of Makramat Khan and Mir Abdul Karim, amounted to 50 lakhs of rupees."

The Taj still remains the finest monument of conjugal love and fidelity in the world. No one who has not visited it can have an idea of its superb beauty and enduring charm.[10]

With Shahjahan's death, art declined for his successor Aurangzeb was a Puritan, who had neither the will nor the money to patronise art. The only notable buildings reared by his piety are the little marble mosque in the fort of Delhi for his private use, the mosque in Benares on the ruins of the Vishwanāth temple (1669) and the Badshahi mosque in Lahore (1674) which is regarded as the latest specimen of the Mughal style of architecture.

This probably refers to the central dome. The time which the edifice took for its completion is variously recorded. The inscription on the entrance gate is dated 1057 A. H. (1647 A. D.) which gives a period of 17 years, but the work seems to have continued for two or three years more. Tavernier who was in India in 1653 says that the building was completed in 22 years and his statement seems to be correct. Travels in India, Pt. II, Book I, p. 50.

10 Shahjahan himself described the Taj in a verse quoted by Abdul Hamid Lahori. A few lines may be reproduced here:

"Should guilty seek asylum here.
Like one pardoned, he becomes free from sin.
Should a sinner make his way to this mansion,
All his past sins are sure to be washed away,
The sight of this mansion creates sorrowing sighs
And makes sun and moon shed tears from their eyes,
In this world this edifice has been made
To display thereby the creator's glory."

Sir Edwin Arnold echoes Shahjahan's praise:

"Not architecture! as all others are,
But the proud passion of an emperor's love,
Wrought into living stone, which gleams and soars
With body of beauty shrining soul and thought."

The Sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda were also men of fine tastes. The famous buildings at Bijapur are the Jam-i-Masjid of Ali Adil Shah I (1557—79), the tomb of Adil Shah II, and the royal palaces such as the Gagan Mahal and Asar Mahal in which wood is used. The Satmanzilā or a seven-storeyed building in the city and a little gateway called the Mithari Mahal, which is a mixture of Hindu and Muhammadan styles, are most elegant and richly carved with ornamentation. At Golkunda the tomb of Quli Qutb Shah erected in 1625 is one of the largest and finest buildings in the Deccan.

Painting.

Painting was not unknown to the Hindus, but it found no encouragement at the hands of the Muslim rulers of pre-Mughal days. We find Sultan Firuz Tughluq in the 14th century prohibiting painting of portraits and wall-decorations in his palace. The art of painting owes its revival in India to the Mughals. The ancestors of the Mughals were lovers of art. Shahrukh Mirza, son of Timur, Baisungar Mirza, and Husain Baiqara of Herat were great patrons of the art of painting. At the court of the last-named prince flourished Bihzād, the Raphael of the East, in whom the Persian and Chinese arts were so exquisitely blended. Babar inherited the artistic tastes of his forefathers. He was a great lover of beauty and art, and found the keenest delight in flowers, running streams and bubbling springs. Humayun developed a taste for painting during his exile in Persia, and on his return to India, he brought with him Mir Saiyyid Ali Tabrizi and Khwajah Abdus Samad, two master-painters of the neo-Persian school of painting, to prepare for him a fully illustrated copy of the *Dastān-i-Amir Hamzah*. It is said the emperor and his little son Akbar took lessons in drawing, and greatly interested themselves in painting. But Humayun's early death did not permit of any great work of art being planned. This glory was left to his son Akbar who



Emperor Akbar witnessing an Elephant Fight on a bridge of boats across the Jhelum

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did much to encourage the fine arts. From his early youth the emperor had a great liking for painting. Abul Fazl says:

> "He (Akbar) gives it every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means both of study and amusement. Hence the art flourishes, and many painters have obtained great reputation. The works of all painters are weekly laid before his Majesty by the Daroghas and the clerks; he then confers rewards according to excellence of workmanship, or increases the monthly salaries. Much progress was made in the commodities required by painters, and the correct prices of such articles were carefully ascertained. The mixture of colours has especially been improved. The pictures thus received a hitherto unknown finish. Most excellent painters are now to be found, and masterpieces worthy of a Bihzād may be placed at the side of the wonder-works of the European painters who have attained world-wide fame. The minuteness in detail, the general finish, the boldness of execution, etc., now observed in pictures are incomparable; even inanimate objects look as if they had life. More than a hundred painters have become famous masters of the art, while the number of those who approach perfection, or of those who are middling, is very large. This is especially true of the Hindus; their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them."[11]

The emperor greatly valued painting. Abul Fazl records what he said:

> "It appears to me, as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognising God, for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising the limbs one after

[11] Ain, Vol. I, p. 107.

another, must come to feel that he cannot bestow personality on his work, and is thus forced to think of God, the giver of life, and thus increase his knowledge."

The new environment in which the emperor deliberately placed himself, the active association of Hindus and Muslims, and the adoption of the enlightened principle of religious toleration had their influence on the art of the age, and the result of this was the fusion of Indian and Persian traditions in the technique, variety and quality of colours. The emperor extended his patronage to Hindu and Muslim painters, examined every week their works, and offered criticisms and suggestions. More than a hundred painters acquired great eminence in the art, while the number of lesser men rose by hundreds. The leading painters were Abdus Samad, Mir Saiyyid Ali, and Farrukh Beg among Muslims and Daswant, Basāwan, Sanwal Dās, Tārāchand, Jagannāth, and a number of others among the Hindus. Basāwan excelled in the painting of backgrounds, the drawing of features, the distribution of colours and portraiture. Daswant, his rival, was still more famous. He belonged to the caste of palki-bearers (*Kahars*), but from his boyhood he had a passion for painting. Akbar discerned his gift and placed him under the care of Abdus Samad. His work was much appreciated, but when he was at the height of his fame he became insane and killed himself.

By the emperor's orders the master-painters illustrated several well-known works as the *Chingiznāmah*, the *Zafarnāmah*, *Razmnāmah*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Naldaman*, *Kāliyadaman*, and *Ayārdānish*, and the pictorial section of the imperial library contained books and manuscripts with pictures of all kinds. The best work was done during the emperor's stay at Fatehpur. When the court was transferred to Lahore a few artists accompanied the emperor, but the majority were sent to Agra to carry on their work in the royal palaces in the fort.

Jahangir was a great lover of nature and beauty. The school of painting received a fresh impetus in his reign, and two factors aided its development—the artistic personality of the monarch and the settled condition of the country. Jahangir was a connoisseur and a keen collector of historical paintings. He boasted of his skill in judging the value of portraits. He says:

> "As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought to me, either of the deceased artists or those of the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the work of each of them. If any other person has put in the eye and eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and who has painted the eyes and eyebrows."

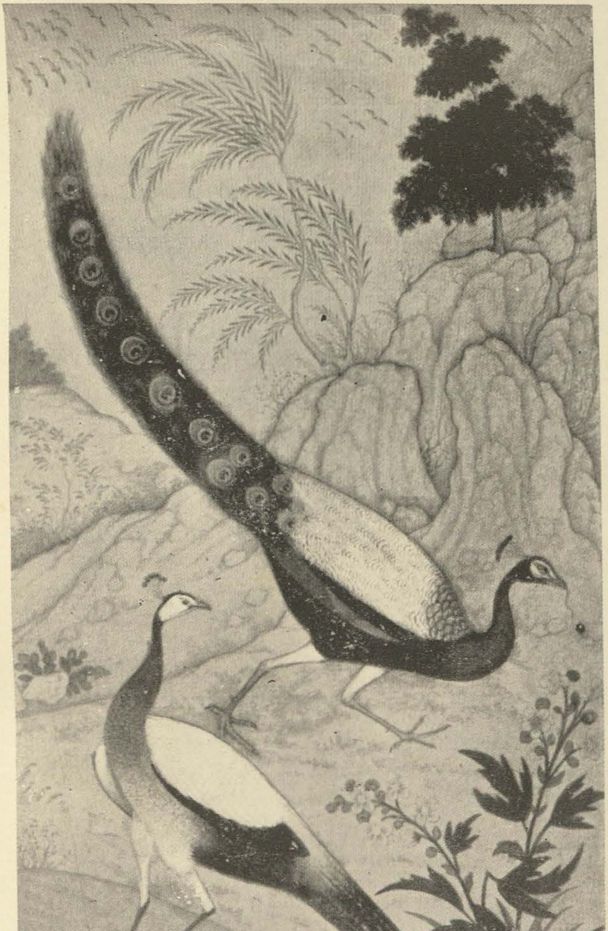
This may be exaggerated self-praise, but there is no doubt that Jahangir possessed the skilled knowledge of an expert. Sir Thomas Roe bears testimony to the keen interest shown by him in the pictures which he presented to him. The leaders of the art in Jahangir's day were Farrukh Beg, Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad. Abul Hasan's son Aqa Riza was one of the most distinguished painters of the age on whom the emperor conferred the title of *Nādir-uz-Zamān*. About his work the emperor says: 'At the present time he has no equal or rival. If at this day the masters Abdul Hay and Bihzād were alive, they would have done him justice.' Ustād Mansūr who enjoyed the title of *Nādir-ul-asar* was a renowned artist who portrayed birds with wonderful skill. The Hindu artists were not favoured much at court, though Jahangir refers

to one Bishen Dās, a portrait-painter, who was 'unequalled in his age for taking likenesses.' Other Hindu painters were Keshava the elder, Keshava the younger, Monohar, Mādhava, Tulsī and others. Natural scenes were the favourite subjects of Jahangir's painters who were fully imbued with the spirit of their patron. Painting of plants, flowers, animals, birds, and other natural objects reached the highest stage of development. An important fact worth mention in Jahangir's reign is the elimination of Persian influence. The art becomes essentially Indian in character, and Indian genius triumphs over the Persian. With the death of Jahangir the art of painting declined in importance, and Percy Brown rightly observes: "With his (Jahangir's) passing the soul of Mughal painting also departed; its outward form remained for a time, in gold and lavish vestments it lived on under other kings, but its real spirit died with Jahangir."[12]

Shahjahan was a great lover of art, but he was more interested in buildings than in painting. He lacked that passion for painting which characterised his predecessor, although he took pleasure in the creations of his court painters. He reduced the number of the latter who now sought the patronage of the nobles and officers of the state. Asaf Khan was one of them. His house at Lahore was elegantly decorated, and was one of the finest mansions in the country. Dara was a great patron of the pictorial art. A precious album of his is still preserved in the library of the India Office. The chief director of artists in Shahjahan's time was Faqirullah, and the most well-known painters were Mir Hāshim, Anūp Chitra, and Chitramani.

Bernier writes that art suffered much towards the close of Shahjahan's reign, but his statement seems to apply to ordinary bazar artists. Eminent artists still continued to be employed

[12] Moghul Painting, p. 86.



Peafowl
(Mughal Painting)

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at court and by the great nobles who treated them well and appreciated their work. Even under Aurangzeb the painters did not wholly disappear. There are pictures of Aurangzeb's battles and sieges still extant which show that he did not wholly discourage the art.

The Rajput princes did not neglect the art of painting. Following the example of the Mughal court, they extended their patronage to it. A school of painting grew up, which has been called on account of certain distinctive features the Rajput school. It treated of popular and familiar themes, and expressed through line and colour the emotions of a race distinguished for its noble qualities. It mirrors the life of the simple villager, his religion and his pursuits and pastimes. In this school religion is closely associated with art, and it has been rightly said that with its spiritual and emotional inspirations it supersedes the secular and matter-of-fact Mughal style.

The art of painting owed much to Mughal patronage in India. The Mughal emperors saved it from decay, and through their liberality it attained to a high level of excellence. The empire of the Mughals has become a thing of the past, but the exquisite creations of the master-artists of their time still bear testimony to their refined culture and the magnificence of their tastes. Indeed they occupy a position unique among all Asiatic rulers.

Music.

Music was actively patronised by the Mughals. Indeed it was a part of the general accomplishment of a Mughal prince. Stanley Lane-Poole writes that the art of improvising a quatrain on the spot, quoting Persian classics, writing a good hand, and singing a good song were much appreciated in Babar's world. Babar was himself fond of music, composed songs, and several of his airs have survived him. Humayun enjoyed the company of singers and musicians and listened to music on Mondays

and Wednesdays. During the capture of Mandu in 1535, when he ordered a general massacre of the prisoners, he was informed that there was a musician called Bachchū among the captives. The emperor granted him an audience, and was so pleased with his performance that he ordered him to be enrolled among the musicians of the court. The Sūrs were not behind the Mughals in their patronage of art, and Badaoni complains that they 'were enticed from the path of fortitude and self-restraint by all sorts of sense-ravishing allurements.' Islam Shah and Adil were both lovers of music, and it is said that at one time the latter granted to a Bhagat boy, who was a skilled musician, a *mansab* of 10,000. Akbar was a great lover of the fine arts. "His Majesty," says Abul Fazl, "pays much attention to music and is the patron of all who practise this enchanting art. There are numerous musicians at the court—Hindus, Iranis, Turanis, Kashmiris, both men and women." The court musicians were arranged in seven groups, one for each day in the week. The emperor had a knowledge of the technique of music and played exquisitely on the *naqarrah*. He is said to have composed tunes which were the delight of the old and young. His keen interest in music drew to his court musicians from all parts of India. The most famous of these was Miyan Tānsen of Gwalior who was originally a Hindu. Abul Fazl describes him as 'the foremost of the age among the Kalāwants of Gwalior.' At the imperial court Tānsen rose into prominence, and enjoyed his patron's favour throughout his life. So sweet and rapturous was his melody that it induced 'intoxication in some and sobriety in others.' He died at Gwalior in 1588. His grave is still visited by musicians, and the leaves of the tamarind tree overhanging it are chewed to make the voice rich and melodious. The courtiers of Akbar with the exception of Mubarak and Abul Fazl also patronised music. There were many books on music and painting in Faizi's library. Abdur

Rahim Khan-i-Khānān was a poet and music-composer himself, and had in his service half a dozen skilled musicians. Rajas Bhagwān Dās and Mān Singh were equally interested in music, and extended their patronage to musicians, coming from such distant parts of the country as Khandesh. The Hindus and Muslims borrowed ideas from each other, and by their joint efforts contributed much to the advancement of the Hindustani music. New varieties of *Rāgas* were introduced by famous singers. Sanskrit works on music were translated into Persian, and a large number of songs were composed which are in use to this day.

Jahangir maintained the traditions of his father's court, and the *Iqbālnāmah-i-Jahangiri* makes mention of the musicians whom he patronised. Shahjahan was a great lover of the fine arts. He heard music both vocal and instrumental and enjoyed it. He was himself the author of certain Hindi songs which were so sweet and charming that 'many pure-souled Sufis lost their senses in the ecstasy produced by his singing.'[13] The historian Muhammad Salih and his brother both were accomplished in Hindi song. Hindu performers were also patronised by the court and among the leading men the names of Jagnāth and Janārdan Bhatta of Bikaner are worthy of mention. After Shahjahan's death the art of music declined. Aurangzeb, though he was well-versed in the science of music was averse to practical performance, and by his orders poets and singers were banished from the court.

Persian literature.

The Mughal period marks a new era in the literary history of India. The tolerant policy of the Mughals made possible the conditions in which art and literature thrives. Babar was himself a refined scholar, well-versed in Arabic, Persian, and Turki. He composed poems and valued the writings of other men with the fastidious-

13 Sarkar, Studies in Mughal India, pp. 12-13.

is his *Memoirs,* which he wrote in the Turkish language. His full and frank account of his own life—one of the best in Eastern literature—is free from cant and hypocrisy, and is of great value from the historical point of view. He took delight in the society of learned men, and in holding discussions with them he found the best intellectual satisfaction. Humayun, though unfortunate in his political plans, was a well-read scholar who adorned his court with poets, philosophers, and divines, with whom he used to hold converse like his father. He was interested in geography and astronomy and was so fond of books that he always used to carry a library with him even during his expeditions. Jauhar, the celebrated author of the *Tazkirāt-ul-Waqiat,* was a servant of Humayun.

Akbar's reign was the golden age of Indo-Muslim art and literature. The Hindu and Muslim genius soared to the highest pitch, and produced work of which any country may feel proud. The Imperial patronage was freely extended to Persian and Hindi literatures, and the emperor showed an equal interest in both. The Persian literature of Akbar's time may be considered under two heads—(1) historiography, and (2) literature proper, which includes poetry and prose, not directly historical. The most well-known historical works of the time are the *Tarikh-i-Alfi* of Mulla Daūd, the *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnamah* of Abul Fazl, the *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* of Badaoni, the *Tabqat-i-Akbari* of Nizamuddin Ahmad, the *Akbarnamah* of Faizi Sarhindi, the *Masir-i-Rahimi* of Abdul Bāqī, which was compiled under the patronage of Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. The greatest writer of the age was Abul Fazl, who was a poet, essayist, critic, historian and man of letters. He was a master of prose whose mind was richly stored with knowledge of all kinds. He wrote with a facility and ease which has never been surpassed in the East. His letters are still studied in all Indian *madrasahs,* and though ness of a literary critic. His greatest achievement, however,

somewhat difficult to understand, they are perfect models. Abul Fazl's style appears inflated and verbose to Western readers, but in chasteness and elegance it is unsurpassed. An important feature of his works lies in the purity of their contents. A Sūfi by conviction, ready to embrace truth wherever found and eager in the quest of knowledge, Abul Fazl never expresses an impure thought, and Mr. Blochmann positively asserts that there is no passage in his works where woman is lightly spoken of, or where immorality is passed over with indifference. Abul Fazl's fame rests on his two works—the *Ain-i-Akbari* and the *Akbarnamah* written in singularly elegant Persian and containing valuable information about Akbar's reign. Want of space forbids a detailed criticism of Abul Fazl's works, but this much may be said that his prose is vigorous, elegant and free from solecisms and other defects. He uses rare similes and metaphors with admirable ease and grace, though his rhetoric sometimes obscures in a labyrinth of words the argument which he seeks to elucidate. Abdulla Uzbeg used to say, 'I am not so afraid of the sword of Akbar as I am of the pen of Abul Fazl.' What could be a greater tribute to Abul Fazl's literary skill than this?

By the emperor's orders many Sanskrit works were translated into Persian. Abdul Qadīr Badaoni (1540—94 A.D.), an orthodox Mulla, was employed to translate Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* into Persian, and also a portion of the *Mahābhārata*, and in his history he often complains of the sacrilegious task on which he was engaged. The *Atharva Veda* was translated by Haji Ibrahim Sarhindi and the bulk of the *Mahābhārata* renamed *Razmnamah* by Naqib Khan. *Līlāvatī*, a work on arithmetic, was rendered into Persian by Faizi.

Coming to literature proper, we find a number of first-rate poets and prose-writers, who produced their work under court patronage. Among poets, the name of Ghizali stands

first. Persecuted in his native country, Persia, he came to the Deccan, but failed to secure royal patronage. Then he went to Jaunpur from which place he passed on to the imperial court where he made such an impression that he was raised to the position of Poet-laureate. He held that office till 1572. He was a man of Sūfi leanings, liberal in outlook, and independent in judgment. His famous works are the *Mīrāt-ul-Kainat*, *Naqsh-i-Badid*, and *Isrār-i-Maktūb*.

Next to Ghizali comes Abul Faiz, better known as Faizi, brother of Abul Fazl and son of Shaikh Mubarak, who was also raised to the office of Poet-laureate. He possessed a wide knowledge of Arabic literature, the art of poetry, and the science of medicine, and used to treat the poor without accepting any payment. He wrote many works, the most famous of which are *Masnavi Nala-o-Daman*, *Markaz-i-Adwār*, *Mawārid-ul-Kalā*, and *Sawāti-ul-Ilhām*. The first is regarded as the best of his works. Even Badaoni, who looked upon him as a heretic, praises the last work, and says that such *Masnavi* was not written in India since the days of Amir Khusrau. Another important work is the *Sawāti-ul-Ilhām* (rays of inspiration) which is a commentary on the Quran in Arabic in which the poet employs such letters as have no dots. The industry and scholarship revealed in this book are beyond all praise.

Faizi shone brilliantly as a poet and in all that he wrote there is enthralling charm. His style is chaste, pure, and free from all kinds of vulgarism, and in all his works we find the noblest sentiments expressed in a most beautiful language.

Other poets of distinction were Muhammad Husain Nāziri of Nishapur who wrote ghazals of rare merit, and Saiyyad Jamāluddin 'Urfi of Shiraz who joined the court of the Khan-i-Khanan in 1581. He wrote some *qasīdās* in praise of the Khan-i-Khanan and the emperors Akbar and Jahangir. He

was not much esteemed at the imperial court, because the *qasīdā* was not in vogue at the time. Besides, his proud and egotistical nature repelled all those who came in contact with him. As a writer of *qasīdās* he occupies the highest place among his contemporaries.

Jahangir was in intellect and character inferior to his great father. But he was not devoid of literary taste. He had received an excellent education under the care of tutors like Maulana Mir Kalān Muhaddis and Mirza Abdur Rahim. He had a good knowledge of Persian, and was also acquainted with Turki which he could understand. His autobiography ranks second to that of Babar in frankness, sincerity, and freshness and charm of style. Among the learned men who lived at his court were Mirza Ghiyas Beg, Naqīb Khan, Mutmād Khan, Niamatullah, Abdul Haq Dehlwi and others. Several historical works were compiled during Jahangir's reign, the most important of which are the *Iqbālnāmah-i-Jahangiri*, the *Māsir-i-Jahangiri*, and the *Zubd-ut-Tawarikh*.

Shahjahan carried on the traditions of his forefathers. He extended his patronage to men of letters and among the chief men of the time are Abdul Hamīd Lahori, author of the *Padshahnamah*, Amīn Qazwīnī, author of another *Padshahnamah*, Ināyat Khan, author of the *Shahjahannamah*, and Muhammad Salih, author of the *Amal Salih*, which are all histories of Shahjahan's reign. Besides these historiographers-royal there were numerous poets and theologians at court whose names are mentioned at great length both by Qazwīnī and Abdul Hamīd. Among the emperor's sons Dara was a great scholar interested in religious and philosophical studies. Like his great-grandfather Akbar, he was an ardent Sūfi who sought to create a bridge between the warring creeds. He caused the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and the *Yoga Vāsiṣtha* to be translated into Persian, and engaged himself in the compilation of a number of works, the chief of which

are the *Majmua-al-Bahrīn*, a treatise on the technical terms of Hindu pantheism and their equivalents in Sūfi phraseology, the *Safinat-al-Aulia*, a biography of the saints of Islam, and the *Sakīnat-ul-Aulia*, which contains an account of saint Mian Mir and his disciples. Aurangzeb, though a bigoted Sunni, was an accurate scholar well-versed in theology and Islamic jurisprudence. It was at his instance that the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* was compiled. He disliked poetry and was opposed to the writing of a history of his reign. The *Muntakhab-ul-Lubāb* of Muhammad Hāshim (Khwāfi Khan), which is an exhaustive survey of his reign, was prepared in secrecy. The other well-known histories of his reign are the *Alamgirnamah*, the *Māsir-i-Alamgiri*, the *Khulāsat-ut-Tawārīkh* of Sujan Rai Khatri, and the works of Bhīmsen and Ishwar Dās. The *Ruqqāt-i-Alamgīri* is a collection of the emperor's letters which shows his mastery over simple and elegant Persian.

The Mughal government did not recognise popular education as one of its duties. *Madrasahs* were maintained; stipends were granted to scholars; but nothing was done to organise a system of public education. Not even a printing press was introduced to make the diffusion of learning possible. The Hindus fared badly during Aurangzeb's reign. Their schools were closed down, and much of the good work accomplished by his predecessors was undone.

A word must be said about the literary labours of Mughal princesses. Gulbadan Begum, the daughter of Babar, was an accomplished lady who wrote the *Humayunamah*, which still remains an authority for Humayun's reign. Sultana Salīmā, daughter of Humayun's sister Gulrukh, Māham-Anga, Nurjahan, Mumtaz Mahal, and Jahanara Begum were all accomplished ladies who took a keen interest in art and literature. Aurangzeb's daughter Zebunnissa was a gifted poetess, well-versed in Arabic and Persian, and the *Diwan-i-Makhfi* is a noble monument of her genius.

In a previous chapter the rise and growth of Hindi literature has been traced to the times of Kabir and Nānak, who preached in the language of the people. Kabir contributed a great deal to Hindi poetry, and his *dohās* and *Ṣākhīs*, breathing an intense moral fervour, are among the priceless gems of Hindi literature. The first author of note, whom we come across in this period, is Malik Muhammad Jāyasī, who wrote his *Padmāvat* obviously in the time of Sher Shah, because he speaks of him in terms of high praise. The *Padmāvat* describes the story of Padmini, the queen of Mewar, in highly embellished language, but beneath the tenderness and love with which the whole poem is suffused, there is a remarkable philosophical depth which profoundly impresses us. With the accession of Akbar to the Mughal throne, the history of Hindi literature entered upon a new epoch. The emperor was keenly interested in Hindi poetry and song, and his tolerant spirit attracted to his court the most eminent poets and singers from all parts of the country. The association of the most talented Hindus of the age with the emperor secured official support for a class of writers who had been so far neglected or treated with contempt. The brilliant conquests and administrative reforms of Akbar inaugurated a new era; and the latter half of the 16th century became an age of exuberant imagination, gorgeous display, and romance—an age of heroic deeds and gallant adventure, which like the Elizabethan age called forth the best powers of man. The sweetness and melody of *Brij Bhāṣā* appealed powerfully to the nobles of the imperial court at Agra, and their contact proved highly beneficial to its growth. In the hands of Hindu officers who had learnt Persian, the language lost much of its old crudity, and became sweet, chaste and artistic. No less was the influence exerted upon it by Muslim officers like Mirza Abdur Rahim, who composed verses in Hindi and

Vernacular liter-currents.

appreciated the work of Hindi poets. Among the courtiers of Akbar, Todar Mal, Rajas Bhagwān Dās and Mān Singh wrote verses in Hindi, and Bīrbal's poetical talent won him the title of *Kavi Rāya* from the emperor. The most distinguished Hindi poet among Akbar's ministers was Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, whose dohās, in which is enshrined the quintessence of human wisdom and experience, are still read and admired all over Northern India. He was a great scholar, and among his many works is the *Rahim Satsai*, a collection of *dohās*, which contains poetry of a high order. Other poets at Akbar's court whose names may be mentioned are Karan and Nạr Hari Sahai, the latter of whom received from the emperor the title of *Mahāpātra* or the great vessel.

Most of the poetry of the time was religious. Its themes were borrowed from the cults of Kṛiṣṇa and Rāma, which flourished side by side. The poets of the former school were the *Aṣṭacchāp* of Vallabhāchārya among whom the most famous is Sūr Das, the blind bard of Agra. In his *Sūrsāgar* he wrote about the sports of *Kṛṣṇa's* childhood, and composed hundreds of verses in describing the beauty of Kṛṣṇa and his beloved Rādhā. He wrote in *Brij Bhāṣā* and made a lavish use of imagery. The following words of praise about Sūr Dās are in everybody's mouth :

> "Sūr is the sun, Tulsi the moon, Keśava is a cluster of stars, but the poets of the modern age are like so many glow-worms giving light here and there."[14]

Other writers of this school are Nand Dās, author of the *Rās-panchādhyāyī*, Vithal Nāth, author of the *Chaurasi Vaiṣṇava ki Vārtā* in prose, Parmānand Dās and Kumbhan Dās.

[14] It is the English rendering of a well-known Hindi Verse.

Kumbhan Dās was a man of great renunciation. Tradition says he was once invited by Akbar to Fatehpur Sikri, but he regretted his visit to the imperial court as is shown by the following verse :

> What have the saints got to do in Sikri? In going and returning shoes were worn out, and the name of Hari was forgotten. Greetings had to be offered to those the sight of whose faces causes pain. Kumbhan Dās says without Girdhar all else is useless.

Ras Khan, another well-known Hindi poet, who was a Muslim, was a disciple of Vithal Nāth and a worshipper of Kṛṣṇa. His name is mentioned in the *Doso Vaiṣṇava ki Vārtā.* One of his works is *Premvātīkā* which was composed about 1614 A.D. The *Kabittas* and *Savaiyās* are full of love and are written in happy and attractive style.

Among the poets who popularised the cult of Rāma the foremost is Tulsi Dās (1532—1623 A.D.), whose name is a household word among the millions in Northern India. There is no mention of him in the *Ain-i-Akbari,* the *Akbarnamah,* or any other contemporary Muslim chronicle. Probably he never visited the imperial court, and in all his works there is not even a casual reference to the government of the day. The empire of Akbar has passed away, but the empire of Tulsi Dās over the hearts and minds of millions in India still continues. He was gifted with wonderful poetic powers which he used to the best advantage in achieving the object so dear to his heart. Sir George Grierson writers of him :

> " One of the greatest reformers and one of the greatest poets that India has produced—to the present writer he is, in both characters, *the* greatest—he disained to found a church, and contented himself with telling his

fellow-countrymen how to work out each his own salvation amongst his own kith and kin."[15]

He goes on to add :

> " Pandits may talk of Vedas and Upaniṣads, and a few may even study them : others may say they find their faith in the *Purānas*, but to the vast majority of the people of Hindustan, learned and unlearned alike, their sole norm of conduct is the so-called Tulsikrita Ramayana."

What is Tulsi Dās's teaching— He lays stress upon the worship of Rāma. Though he accepts the pantheistic teaching of Vedānta, he had faith in a personal God who is none other than Rāma. Man is sinful by nature and unworthy of salvation. Yet the Supreme Being in His infinite mercy assumed a human form in the person of Rāma for the redemption of the world's misery. He emphasises the value of a moral life and inculcates virtues which every human being ought to possess. Tulsi Dās founded no church or sect and was satisfied with preaching the highest morality to man. He wrote a number of works of which the most famous is the *Rāmcharitmāns* or 'The Lake of the Deeds of Rāma.' The subject of the poem is the story of Rāma's life. The great ideals of conduct and duty—obedience to parents, devotion to husband, affection towards brothers, kindness to the poor and faith in friendship are all inculcated here with a beauty and skill rare in the history of the world's literature. Tulsi Dās was not a mere ascetic. He had experienced the joys and sorrows of married life, and knew the temptations and weaknesses of ordinary men. That is why he could appeal with success to the multitude who cried,

[15] Imp. Gaz., II, p. 418.

'Here is a great soul that knows us. Let us choose him for our guide.'

Another poet whose name deserves mention in this place is Nābhāji, the author of the *Bhaktamāla,* which contains notices of principal devotees and saints, whether worshippers of Rāma or Kṛṣṇa.

The poets who have been described before were religious *par excellence,* and their principal theme was *Bhakti* or devotion towards Rāma or Kṛṣṇa. Besides these there were others whose work determined the canons of poetic criticism. The most remarkable of this group is Keśava Das, a Sanādhya Brāhman of Orcha, who died about 1617 A.D. He wrote on poetics and his works are still read with great interest. The most admired of his works is the Kavi Priya in which he describes the good qualities of a poem and other matters connected with the art of writing poetry. It was dedicated to a courtesan, who was also the author of a number of short poems. The other works of Keśava are *Rāma Chandrikā,* a story of the life of Rāma, *Rasik Priya,* a treatise on poetical composition, and *Alankrit Manjarī,* a work on prosody. These have placed Keśava in the forefront of Hindi poets, and though his poetry is not easy to understand, there is no doubt that he shows very great skill and scholarship in treating his subject.

The successors of Keśava in Hindi poetry were Sundar, Senāpati and the Tripāthi brothers, who flourished in the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. Sundar was a Brāhman of Gwalior, who received the titles of *Kavi Rāya* and *Mahākavi Rāya* from Shahjahan. In 1631 he wrote the *Sundar Srangār,* a work on poetical composition, and prepared a *Brij Bhāsā* version of the *Siṁhāsan Battīsī.* Senāpati was a devotee of Krisna. His principal work is *Kabitta Ratnākar* which deals with the various aspects of the art of poetry. The beautiful description of nature in his Śatritu Varnan excels all other Hindi poets except Devadātta. Among the Tripāthi brothers the most

famous is Bhūsan Tripāthi, whose patrons were Shivaji, the Maratha ruler, and Chatrasāl Bundela of Panna. Bhūsan was a pro-Hindu poet who is especially concerned with the glory and greatness of his own community. His principal works are *Shivāvali*, *Chatrasaldaśaka*, and *Shivarājabhūṣaṇa*, a treatise on *alankārs*, illustrated by heroic poems in praise of *Shivaji*. Other important poets of the period are Mati Rām Tripathi who is famous for the excellence of his similes, Deva Kavi of Etawah and Behari Lal Chaube, author of the well-known *Behari Satsai*. Behari Lal lived during the years 1603—1663. His patron was Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur who is said to have given him a gold *asharfi* for every *doha*. Behari Lal's fame as a poet rests upon his *Satsai* (1662 A.D.), a collection of about 700 *dohas* and *sorthas*, which are undoubtedly the 'daintiest pieces of art in any Indian language.' The verses are mostly the amorous utterances of Rādha and Kṛṣṇa, and their meaning is not easy to comprehend. The *Satsai* has had many commentators to elucidate the obscurities inseparable from a work in which each couplet is a complete whole in itself, but no one who reads it can fail to recognise the poet's skill and felicity of expression and the masterly way in which he depicts the natural phenomena as when he speaks of the scent-laden breeze under the guise of a way-worn pilgrim from the south.

The decline of Hindi poetry set in during the reign of Aurangzeb. The court patronage was not entirely withdrawn, but the era of great poets was closed. The dissolution of the Mughal empire had a disastrous effect on the fine arts, and Hindi literature like others suffered a heavy set-back. We do not find much Urdu poetry written in the north during this period. The real rise of Urdu took place in the Deccan under the patronage of the Sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda, some of whom were men of great culture and refinement. Wali of Aurangabad who was born in 1668 was a celebrated poet

who wrote *ghazals*, masnavis, *rūbiyāts* in a simple, natural, and elegant style. He is said to have visited Delhi twice. His *diwan* aroused great interest at the Mughal capital and laid the foundation of Urdu poetry. Several poets wrote in imitation of his work. The most important of them are Hātim (1699—1792), Khan Arzū (1689—1756), and Abrū and Mazhar (1698—1781), who have rightly been called the fathers of Urdu poetry in the north.

Religious currents.

The sixteenth century like the fifteenth was an age of great religious stir, when Vaiṣṇavism made a powerful appeal to the hearts of millions in Northern India and Bengal. The devotees of Rama and Kṛṣṇa cults branched off into a number of sects and inculcated worship according to their ideas. The founder of the Kṛṣṇa cult, Vallabhāchārya, was succeeded by his son Vithal Nātha, and his disciples were called the *Aṣṭā-chhāp* (eight seals) among whom Sūr Dās is the most famous. They wrote and preached in *Brij Bhāṣā* and dwelt with great fervour and devotion upon the sports of Kṛīṣṇa's childhood. A number of works appeared which laid stress on the erotic side of Kṛiṣṇa's life, the most important of which is Gokul Nāth's *Chaurāsī Vaiṣṇava ḳi Vārtā* (talk of eighty-four Vaiṣ-ṇavas) written some time about 1551 A.D. The Rādhā Ballabhi sect was founded by Hari Vamsa about 1585 A.D., and the chief temple of its followers at Brindaban is dedicated to Rādhā. They worship Rādhā and seek to gain the favour of Kṛiṣṇa through her.

The leading exponent of the Rāma cult was Tulsi Dās, who preaches the worship of Rāma as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Though he is a believer in *Advaita* philosophy, he accepts the principles and practices of orthodox Hinduism. He upholds caste, lays stress upon Brāhmanical superiority, deprecates the freedom of women, but while doing all this he puts forward in words that move the heart the doctrine of *Bhaḳti* or devo-

tion to a personal God. He did not found a sect, but he acted as a reformer and teacher and loved the people whom he taught the very best he knew in their own language.

Besides Tulsi Dās there were other reformers, who departed from orthodox Hinduism and founded their own sects. Their teachings bear the impress of Muslim influence. Dādū (1544—1603), better known as Dadū Dayāl by reason of his kindness towards all living beings, denounced idolatry and caste, rejected the formal ritual of Hinduism, and laid stress upon the simple faith in God. The Lāldāsīs emphasised the value of *Rāmanāma*, and the Sādhs and Dharamdāsīs pointed out the value of repeating the name of God and the duty of leading pure and clean lives. Most of these saints sprang from the lower orders, and their philosophy is a protest against orthodox Hinduism.

In Bengal the followers of Chaitanya carried on the great master's wrk. To them *Bhakti* was all in all. There could be no deliverance without *Bhakti*. Even without knowledge *Bhakti* could ensure a man's salvation. Kṛiṣṇa is the *Paramāmtā*, the supreme soul and the supreme object of worship. The leaders of the Vaiṣṇavas in Brindaban were Rūpa and Sanātan, and with them was associated a nephew Jīva Goswāmi, who founded the temple of Rādhā Dāmodar and Gopāl Bhatta. Their names are mentioned in the *Bhaktamāla*.

The Deccan also witnessed the rise of a great religious movement in the 16th century. Eknāth was one of its pioneers. He laid stress on *Bhakti* by means of which women, Sūdras, and all others 'could cross to the other bank.' Tukā Rām who was born about 1600 A.D. is the leading saint of Mahārāshṭra. His love for God knows no bounds, and religion has no other meaning for him. He enjoys worship with a clean and lofty heart, and exhorts men to show kindness according to their powers. This is how heaven is easily

attained. The following words contain the essence of Tukā Rām's teachings :

> "He who calleth the stricken and heavily burdened his own is the man of God ; truly the Lord must abide with him. He that taketh the unprotected to his heart and doeth to a servant the same kindness as to his own children is assured by the image of God."

Tukā Rām's *Abhangas* or unbroken hymns, whose fervent piety elevates the soul and purifies the emotions, are still sung all over Mahārāshṭra, and give solace to millions in distress and sorrow.

Another saint who had a profound influence on the lives of the Maratha people was Rām Dās, the spiritual guide of Shivaji. He was a Vedanist and a Vaiṣṇava who conformed to the orthodox formulæ. He thus expresses the doctrine of *Bhakti* :

> "Oh Rāma, every day I have been consumed by repentance and my unsteady mind cannot be restrained. O thou who art merciful to the poor, remove from me this *māyā* which produces illusion, and hasten to me, for without thee I am fatigued."

Salvation according to him is to be found in Rāma alone. Purity in thought and deed, unselfishness, truthfulness, forgiveness, humility, charity and kindness towards all are the surest passport to heavenly bliss.

INDEX

Explanation of abbreviations used:—t., town; c., city; f., fort; s./o., son of; g.s./o., grandson of; w./o., wife of; m./o., mother of; f./o., father of; b./o., brother of; k., king; r., river.

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